Kommoi in Greek tragedy

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KOMMOI IN GREEK TRAGEDY

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by

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ABSTRACT

The introductory chapter of my thesis consists of two sections. In the first, I discuss the importance of lamentation for the dead in ancient Greek society as an indispensable part of the rites accompanying a funeral ceremony, as evidenced in various sources: funerary vases and monuments, funerary legislation, literary texts. In the second section I examine the form of pre-tragic laments, that is, those found in Homer and the lyric poets Simonides and Pindar, tracing the differences between them.

The main body of the thesis falls into two parts. The first offers a general consideration of *kommoi*, including a definition of the term as a particular type of tragic lament, their most prominent structural features, the metres most frequently used, the various occasions on which they are performed, their position in the play and the participants involved, their most prominent linguistic and stylistic features and the themes most frequently used. When possible, I try to establish a source in real-life lamentation ritual, considering also the extent to which they are influenced by the Homeric and lyric laments and discussing similarities and differences with other forms of tragic laments, so that *kommoi* can be better contextualized within the tradition of lamentation in tragedy. The first part concludes with an examination of Aristophanic parody of tragic lamentation.

In the second part, I examine the dramatic function of individual *kommoi* in three plays of each tragedian, namely, Aeschylus *Persae*, *Septem*, *Choephori*, Sophocles *Ajax*, *Electra*, *Antigone* and Euripides *Supplices*, *Troades*, *Helen*, considering their diverse significance within the play. Finally, I review the differences and similarities in the way the three tragedians treat their *kommoi* and the issues thereby raised about their dramatic technique in general, concluding with a discussion of theories seeking the origins of tragedy in a ritual *threnos*, which arguably derive support from the impressive accumulation of lamenting passages in tragedy.

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PART TWO: DRAMATIC FUNCTION OF INDIVIDUAL *KOMMOI*

PREFACE

The importance of ritual laments for the dead in ancient Greek society has often attracted the interest of scholars, so that a number of studies have recently appeared on this subject, e.g. Reiner (1938), Alexiou (1974), Holst-Warhaft (1992), Foley (1993), Sultan (1993), Derderian (2001).[1] These studies can be seen in the context of the wider scholarly interest of recent years in the death rituals of ancient Greece, e.g. Kurtz - Boardman (1971), Vermeule (1979), Garland (1985), Morris (1987, 1992), Humphreys (1993), Sourvinou-Inwood (1983, 1995), Seaford (1994), an interest extended to death rituals including lamentation for the dead in contemporary rural Greece as well. Studies in this area include: Alexiou (1974), who studies the continuity of ritual lament in Greek culture throughout the ages, Jarrett (1977), who traces the modern Greek lamenting tradition to its ancient west Asian and Mediterranean prototypes, Caraveli-Chaves (1980, 1986), Danforth (1982), Auerbach (1987), Seremetakis (1991), Holst-Warhaft (1992).

The literary genre where lamentation has a prominent role is tragedy, thus it is no surprise that most of the above studies take it into account while discussing the traditional laments for the dead in Greek society. An examination of the various types of tragic laments is the subject of two doctoral theses, Koonce (1962) and Wright (1986), which, however, suffer from lack of clarity in their descriptive terminology (see p. 39, n. 14). My purpose in the present thesis is to study specifically one type of tragic laments, *kommoi*, defined as chorus-actor exchanges with threnetic character. The structure of my thesis is briefly as follows.

In the introductory chapter I discuss first the importance of lamentation for the dead in ancient Greek society as an indispensable part of the rites accompanying a funeral ceremony, and continue with an examination of pre-tragic laments, that is, those found in Homer and the lyric poets Simonides and Pindar.

The main body of the thesis falls into two parts. The first offers a general consideration of *kommoi*, including a definition of the term, their most prominent structural features, the metres most frequently used, the various occasions on which they are performed, their position in the play and the

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[1] The tradition of lamentation in other areas of the ancient world has also attracted scholarly interest in recent years: cf., for example, Martino (1958), Jarrett (1977), Miller (1994).

participants involved, as well as their most prominent linguistic and stylistic features and the themes most frequently used. In the recurrent features of *kommoi* I assume that we can trace the basic characteristics of ritual laments for the dead in Greek society. By 'ritual' I mean the highly artistic tradition of lamentation (with stylized postures and recurrent themes) in contrast to spontaneous expressions of grief. We can assume that *kommoi* combine both, although it is not always easy to trace the line between them.

In this part of the thesis I also consider the extent to which *kommoi* are influenced by the Homeric and lyric laments and discuss similarities to and differences from other forms of tragic laments (namely, choral odes, monodies, amoibaia between actors, monologues, dialogues), so that *kommoi* can be better contextualized within the tradition of lamentation in tragedy. As a detailed examination of the other lamenting forms is obviously beyond the scope of the present study, I confine myself to a brief discussion of them. In order, however, to document the frequency of lamenting passages in tragedy, they are listed in full in Appendices I-VII. For the plays of the three tragedians I use the Oxford editions of Page (1972) for Aeschylus, Lloyd-Jones - Wilson (1990) for Sophocles and Diggle (1981a, 1984, 1994a) for Euripides, unless otherwise stated. A detailed consideration of the tragic fragments was beyond the scope of this study, so I refer to them only occasionally. The first part of the thesis concludes with an examination of Aristophanic parody of tragic lamentation.

In the second part, I examine the dramatic function of individual *kommoi* in three plays of each tragedian, namely, Aeschylus *Persae*, *Septem*, *Choephori*, Sophocles *Ajax*, *Electra*, *Antigone* and Euripides *Supplices*, *Troades*, *Helen*, considering their diverse significance within the play. Finally, I review the differences and similarities in the way the three tragedians treat their *kommoi*, concluding that their widespread use in tragedy together with the impressive accumulation of other lamenting passages in it arguably offers a justification for theories which seek the origins of tragedy in a ritual *threnos*.

Within the limited space of the present study I have tried to give, as far as possible, a complete analysis of the tragic *kommoi*, attempting on the one hand to establish a source in real-life lamentation ritual and on the other hand to see them in the context of the general dramatic technique of the three tragedians. In this way I hope to have contributed to the growing interest of recent years in death rituals and lamentation in ancient Greece as well as to have illuminated the dramatic technique of the three tragedians from another point of view.

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I would like to express here my warmest thanks to the supervisor of my thesis, Mr Bernard Gredley, who guided my research with great patience and enthusiasm from its very beginning till its final stages and supported me in every possible way whenever I needed it. He has read and reread successive drafts of my work, always making suggestions for improvement from minor linguistic/stylistic points to broader issues of interpretation. Almost every page of this work bears his invaluable contributions. I would also like to thank Prof. M.S. Silk and Prof. J. Diggle for their stimulating criticism on the final draft of my thesis as well as Prof. P.E. Easterling and Dr. R.G. Hawley for their most helpful comments as examiners of my thesis.

The three-year King's Research Studentship that I was generously awarded for the years 1996-99 enabled me to concentrate on my research during this period unhindered by financial concerns. The library of the Institute of Classical Studies has been invaluable and special thanks go to its staff for their kind help.

Many friends have helped and supported me in various ways during the writing of my thesis, and I feel the need to thank them all here. Finally, I owe more than I can express to my family who constantly encouraged me and always had confidence in the successful completion of this work.

INTRODUCTION

I. LAMENTATION FOR THE DEAD IN ANCIENT GREECE: ICONOGRAPHIC AND LITERARY EVIDENCE

In ancient Greek society proper burial was considered necessary so that the deceased could be permanently separated from the upper world and incorporated into the lower: so in *Il.* 23. 71ff Patroclus' shade asks Achilles to bury him as soon as possible so that he can pass through the gates of Hades. An indispensable part of the funerary rites was lamentation for the dead, which also assisted the journey to the underworld (cf. *Sept.* 854ff). The frequent combination ἄκλαυτος ἄθαπτος/ἄταφος (cf. *Il.* 22. 386, *Od.* 11. 72, *Ant.* 29, *Hec.* 30, *Pho.* 1634) shows the equal importance of these two rites.[1] Burial without lamentation was inconceivable, hence in *Ag.* 1542-46 the chorus wonder whether Clytemnestra will mourn Agamemnon despite being his murderer. It was also considered a great dishonour for the dead: so in *Cho.* 432-33 the absence of lamentation for Agamemnon is evidence of Clytemnestra's shamelessness. According to the Homeric formula (cf. *Il.* 16. 457, 675, 23. 9, *Od.* 24. 190, 296), lamentation is γέρας θανόντων, usually translated as 'privilege of the dead',[2] while lamenting the dead brings honour to the living as well (cf. E. *Supp.* 78 τὰ τῶν φθιτῶν τοῖς ὁρῶσι κόσμος).[3] It was considered as particularly unfortunate for the deceased and his relatives, if the manner of death prevented mourning and burial from them,[4] while neglect of the living to perform these duties could cause the wrath of the dead or the gods.[5] Lamentation was extended to ritual celebrations performed yearly for divine figures such as Adonis, Linos, Mariandynos[6] or to commemorative ceremonies in honour of a hero, e.g. Adrastus at Sicyon

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[1]Other instances in tragedy where lamentation and burial are mentioned together include *Sept.* 1022-23, *Ag.* 1541, *Ant.* 204-5, *Med.* 1377, *Andr.* 1159-60, *Herc.* 1360-61.

[2]For a discussion of this phrase see Garland (1984).

[3]For a discussion of this phrase see Collard (1975, II. on 78), Diggle (1981b, 5-6).

[4]Cf., for example, *Il.* 22. 426-28, *Cho.* 8-9, S. *El.* 865-70, *I.T.* 172-76.

[5]Cf. *Od.* 11. 72-73 μή μ' ἄκλαυτον ἄθαπτον ἰὼν ὄπιθεν καταλείπειν, νοσφισθείς, μή τοί τι θεῶν μήνιμα γένωμαι (Elpenor's soul addressing Odysseus in the underworld).

[6]For these ritual laments see Reiner (1938, 105ff), Alexiou (1974, 55ff).

(Herod. V. 67. 5), Achilles at Elis (Paus. VI. 23. 3).[7] My interest, however, in this chapter is mainly with private laments.

Vases

In Attic art the *prothesis*, i.e. the laying out of the dead, is the dominant funerary theme, occurring on vases in an unbroken series from the middle of the eighth century till about 400 B.C.[8] The depiction of *prothesis*-scenes during this long period is characterized by a remarkable conservatism, despite the changes in style and types of vases.[9] The deceased is depicted on a bier surrounded by mourners, whose attitude towards him differs according to their sex; the female bereaved stand over the corpse, near the head of the bier, where they arrange the pillows, touch the deceased and sometimes one of them cradles his head in her hands,[10] while men do not usually come closer than the feet of the deceased, often approaching from the reverse side of the vase. Women usually outnumber men, while servants, when present, crouch around the bier. The active involvement of women with the dead and their role in caring for the corpse (that is, washing and dressing it in preparation for burial) is often seen as parallel to their care for infants, since both are equally helpless (cf. Pomeroy 1975, 44; Vermeule 1979, 14). On the other hand, Shapiro (1991, 635) views their role as related to the pollution incurred by death: "Since women could not escape the pollution of giving birth, as men could, they were presumably better suited to deal with the pollution of death." Similarly, Sourvinou-Inwood (1983, 38) argues that women's involvement with death is related to their association with disorder, danger and pollution.

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[7] I refer briefly to these cases in Appendix IX.

[8] For a detailed discussion of the representation of mourning in the Geometric period see Ahlberg (1971), in the Archaic and Classical period Shapiro (1991). Very helpful are also the more general studies by Zschietzschmann (1928), Havelock (1981) and Kurtz (1984).

[9] As Vermeule (1979, 12) notices, the ceremonies of mourning were "probably the oldest and least-changing art-form in Greece". For the conservatism of lamentation cf. Lysias II. 81 ὅμως δ' ἀνάγκη τοῖς ἀρχαίοις ἔθεσι χρῆσθαι, καὶ θεραπεύοντας τὸν πάτριον νόμον ὀλοφύρεσθαι τοὺς θαπτομένους.

[10] Touching of the corpse is often attested in the Homeric and tragic laments (see pp. 22-23 and n. 13, 112).

The usual gesture of women in the Geometric vases is the placing of both hands on the head,[11] unless one hand is occupied with another action, such as touching the bier or the corpse. In Geometric art gestures and postures are highly stylized, so this particular one could be used to denote equally the action of beating the head (κόπτεσθαι) or of rending the hair (τίλλεσθαι).[12] The two hands on the head in combination with the depiction of blood on the cheeks and the forehead is the iconographic expression of the scratching of cheeks.[13] In the Archaic period, these ritual gestures free themselves from stylization and the consequent static form, depicting grief more intensely: they are loosened now, so women extend both arms upwards, as if they want to beat themselves violently, or tear their hair, which is represented as falling over their cheeks wet from tears, or perform the actual scratching of cheeks.

Men are more restrained in the expression of their grief. Their two most common gestures are the placing of one hand on the head and the raising of the arm with the palm displayed, the free hand sometimes holding a weapon. Ahlberg (1971, 265) interprets the former as the action of beating the head and the latter as denoting a farewell to the deceased.[14] Another male attitude consists in the placing of one hand on the head with the other being bent at the side, either touching the legs or being raised at a distance from them. Ahlberg (1971, 266) calls this 'the funerary dancing attitude', which "has the self-evident function of the ritual act of lamentation performed as a dance".[15]

Apart from the above gestures of mourning commonly depicted on vases, literary evidence provides information about some more violent actions of self-infliction: beating of the breast, tearing of robes or their loosening by women, falling on the ground and pouring dust on the head or

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[11]This mourning gesture is restricted to females in Attic *prothesis*, so it clearly identifies the figures who perform it as women (in the Geometric vases, especially of the early period, the sex of the mourners is not clarified in physical terms).

[12]These gestures are traditional in mourning contexts. For their use in Homeric and tragic laments see pp. 25, 118-19.

[13]This is another common mourning gesture (see pp. 25, 118-19).

[14]This gesture is attested in tragedy as well, performed by males (cf. *Cho.* 9, *Alc.* 768-69, E. *Supp.* 772).

[15]In tragedy we find the notion of 'dance of Hades' (cf. E. *Supp.* 75, *Herc.* 1026-27).

soiling oneself in another way.[16] Lucian *De Luctu* 12 refers to these gestures, concluding with sarcasm that the living are more pitiable than the dead: καὶ οἱ ζῶντες οἰκτρότεροι τοῦ νεκροῦ· οἱ μὲν γὰρ χαμαὶ κυλινδοῦνται πολλάκις καὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς ἀράττουσι πρὸς τὸ ἔδαφος, ὁ δ' εὐσχήμων καὶ καλὸς καὶ καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἐστεφανωμένος ὑψηλὸς πρόκειται καὶ μετέωρος ὥσπερ εἰς πομπὴν κεκοσμημένος. These violent acts were not just spontaneous, uncontrolled demonstrations of grief; in fact the *prothesis*, as it is depicted on vases, has a highly stylized character. According to Rohde (1925, 164) they were addressed to the soul of the dead that "would be pleased at the most violent expressions of grief for its loss."[17] However, most scholars agree that such manifestations show the mourners' desire to be identified with the condition of the dead (self-defilement is a symbolic image of the pollution attached to death).[18]

In the Geometric vases the *prothesis* is shown as a grand affair with a great number of mourners while in the Archaic period they are clearly fewer. What may partly account for this change is the available surface on the vases,[19] but it must also have been influenced by Solon's restrictive legislation (see pp. 16-17). In the white-ground *lekythoi* of the fifth century *prothesis* ceases to be the main funerary theme.[20] There are still representations of it, but with considerable differences from those in Geometric and Archaic art: the mourners are limited to three or four, no chorus of male mourners appears but often a single man approaches closer to the bier than in the vases of the earlier periods, women do not mourn so violently tearing their hair

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[16]These gestures are also frequently described in the Homeric and tragic laments (see pp. 25, 118-19).

[17]On the other hand, however, he reports the belief (190, n. 49) that too violent expressions of grief may disturb the rest of the dead and make them return.

[18]See Redfield (1975, 181), Sourvinou-Inwood (1983, 38), Seaford (1994, 86). Other interpretations have also been suggested, e.g. Burkert (1983, 53) explains these gestures as a reflex to protect an endangered member, which, in the absence of any external enemy, turn back to the mourners themselves.

[19]See Garland (1985, 29): "The high, wide zone of a Geometric *krater* or *amphora* naturally lends itself to the depiction of large scenes with many participants, whereas a slender *lekythos* clearly favours an intimate scene with only a few."

[20]For a detailed discussion of the iconography of white-ground *lekythoi* see Shapiro (1991, 649ff).

(which is now cut short as a sign of mourning)[21] or lacerating their flesh. As Shapiro (1991, 650) notices: "On later *prothesis* scenes grief recedes and is replaced by a mood of detachment, introspection, and quiet dignity... One has the sense that the women have taken to heart Perikles' advice to the widows and mothers in his funeral oration, to bear their grief stoically... (Thuc. 2. 44-45)."

Another theme, though not very frequent, of the white-ground *lekythoi*, is the mythological representation of death with the employment of figures such as Hermes Psychopompos, Hypnos, Thanatos, but by far the commonest theme is the visit to the tomb by family members or the preparation at home by a woman for such a visit.[22] The visitors to the tomb do not constitute a chorus, in fact they are never more than two or three (usually a woman relative, accompanied by a female slave or a male relative and sometimes a baby). In most cases they stand quietly without grieving, an attitude obviously reflected in Pericles' funeral oration, but occasionally they perform striking gestures such as falling to the knees with hands outstretched or beating the breast or clutching the head. According to Havelock (1981, 115-16): "It seems as if their actions are motivated more by personal and specific feeling than by a formal ritualized occasion whereby certain modes of behavior are required of them", as was the case in Geometric and Archaic art.[23]

It seems that the white-ground *lekythoi* express the need of the mourners for a more personal communication with the deceased,[24] especially so of the women, in view of the institution of public funeral for the Attic war dead[25] which deprived them of a more intimate relationship with them and

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[21]This funerary practice is attested as early as in Homer (cf. *Il*. 23. 46, 135, 141, *Od*. 4. 198, 24. 46). In tragedy similar references include *Cho*. 6ff, 172, *Alc*. 215, *Hel*. 1087, 1187-88, *Or*. 966, *I.A*. 1437.

[22]The tending of tombs like caring for the corpse was mainly women's responsibility. Offerings at the tomb were made on the third, ninth and thirtieth days after death (or burial) and on certain festivals: see Rohde (1925, 167-70), Kurtz-Boardman (1971, 145-48), Alexiou (1974, 7-8), Humphreys (1980, 100-1). In tragedy this custom is best reflected in the offerings made at Agamemnon's tomb in *Cho*. and in S. and E. *El*.

[23]For a discussion of gestures of mourning in Greek art see also Sittl (1890, 65-78, with references to Roman art as well) and Neumann (1965, 85-89).

[24]See Humphreys (1980, 113).

[25]The time when public funerals were introduced is disputed, for example, Clairmont (1983, 7-15) argues for the late 470s, Jacoby (1944) for 465/4, Humphreys (1993, 89) that relevant

the prominent role they had in mourning. In this case the bodies of the dead were cremated on the battlefield while their bones were gathered and brought back to Athens in order to be buried in Kerameikos. The ceremony included lamentation of the close female relatives over the bones of the dead, then procession to the burial site where the burial was followed by the *epitaphios logos*, and finally further public lamentation.[26] Although, as this description shows, women could still lament for their own dead, the responsibility for the burial had passed from the private to the public sphere, which meant that they were banned from their traditional role of caring for the corpse and indulging in excessive manifestations of grief. In fact, the attitude the funeral oration suggested towards death was not mourning but praise of the valour of the dead,[27] while the advice given especially to women was to retain a certain degree of dignity in bearing their grief.

As far as representations of the *ekphora* are concerned, they are rare both in Geometric and Archaic art.[28] In the Geometric period it is presented as a grand affair: the deceased is carried to the grave on a horse-drawn car including up to five or six chariots, with armed men leading the procession and mourning women following. This impressive procession would naturally reflect the practice of wealthy aristocrats while the unpopularity of similar *ekphora*-scenes may reflect the rarity of the event in real life. In the Archaic period there are similar representations showing up to four chariots being readied for the procession, but the carrying of the dead by pall-bearers and mule-cart in other cases probably shows "more accurately how Everyman was borne away" (Kurtz 1984, 325). There was lamentation during the *ekphora* as the vases show (they depict mourning gestures and *aulos*-players), but that must have been informal, unlike the dirge performed during the *prothesis*. The movement on the road would naturally prevent such a formal lament.

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evidence goes back as far as the history of *polis*. For references to various views see Hornblower (1991, 292-93).

[26]The practice of the public funeral is described in detail in Thuc. II. 34.

[27]This was a recurrent motif in the surviving orations (cf., for example, Demosth. XVIII. 287 τὴν ἐκείνων ἀρετὴν κοσμήσοντα). Thus the *epitaphios logos* can be seen as the substitution for the traditional lamentation (see Loraux 1986, 44ff). In tragedy this turning-point is clearly indicated in E. *Supp.* (see pp. 230ff).

[28]Garland (1985, 31) remarks that there are only three examples of *ekphora* on Geometric vases in comparison with the 52 representations of *prothesis*.

Legislation

In antiquity the funerary legislation of several Greek city-states was addressed primarily to women, aiming at restraining their excessive manifestations of grief at funerals and limiting the right to mourn to kinswomen.[29] The oldest legislation of this kind is Solon's in Athens at the beginning of the sixth century,[30] preserved in three ancient sources, [Demosth.] *Against Macartatus* 62, Plut. *Solon* 21. 4-5 and Cic. *Laws* 2. 59. So [Demosthenes] reports that no woman less than sixty years old was permitted to participate in the *prothesis* and *ekphora* unless they were within the degree of second cousin (ὅσαι ἐντὸς ἀνεψιαδῶν).[31] Furthermore, according to Plutarch, laceration of flesh and the use of prepared dirges (τὸ θρηνεῖν πεποιημένα) were prohibited as well as bewailing anyone else at the burial other than the person being buried[32] and visiting the tombs of non-relatives except at the time of interment. Similarly, Cicero reports that women were prohibited from lacerating their cheeks or staging a 'lugubrem eiulationem'.

Legislative programmes in other parts of Greece imposed similar restrictions on women,[33] whose demonstrative behaviour at funerals could put social order at risk (cf. Plut. *Solon* 21. 4 'Επέστησε...νόμον ἀπείργοντα τὸ ἄτακτον καὶ ἀκόλαστον).[34] Funerals and festivals were the only occasions when women could intrude into the public space of men,[35] and were thus the only means of entertainment open to them, which is what funerary legislation tried to suppress. It is noteworthy that no restrictions are placed upon the attendance of men at funeral ceremonies while the target of all legislative programmes is women, whose lamenting voices could also stir up feelings of

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[29]For a detailed examination of Greek funerary legislation see Garland (1989).

[30]Garland (1989, 3, n. 2) discusses the question whether what is cited as 'laws of Solon' in Attic prose goes in fact back to Solon's days.

[31]As Humphreys (1980, 100) notices: "to restrict female participation in *prothesis* and funeral procession (*ekphora*) to kin and women over sixty markedly reduced both the aural and the visual impact of the procession."

[32]This practice is reported as early as in Homer (cf. *Il.* 19. 301-2, 19. 338-39).

[33]See Garland (1989, 8ff).

[34]It is also interesting to know the existence of γυναικονόμοι (Plut. *Solon* 21. 5), officials whose responsibility was to keep women in order.

[35]Plut. *Solon* 21. 4 associates their conduct in these two occasions: 'Επέστησε δὲ καὶ ταῖς ἐξόδοις τῶν γυναικῶν καὶ τοῖς πένθεσι καὶ ταῖς ἑορταῖς νόμον....

revenge.[36] Another common characteristic of the above legislation is the limiting of the right to mourn to kinswomen or generally close relatives, which, as Alexiou (1974, 17ff) argues, suggests a change of emphasis from clan to family and furthermore the consolidation of private property and of the right of a son to inherit.[37]

Another provision in Solon's legislation was to reduce the levels of expense of funerals, which obviously aimed at restraining the aristocrats from displaying their wealth through ostentatious funeral ceremonies. So his legislative programme included provisions such as: the *prothesis* was to take place within the house for one day and the *ekphora* on the following day, before sunrise,[38] with the men walking in front and the women behind ([Demosthenes]); food and drink brought to the tomb was not to exceed one obol in value; no ox was to be sacrificed at the grave (Plutarch). As Alexiou (1974, 17ff) remarks, these measures can be seen in the context of other reforms of the 6th century to reduce the power of aristocratic clan cults. Similarly, Seaford (1994, 78ff) regards the restrictions on private funerals as complementary to the institution of public burial. The first could prove divisive for the community whereas the second communalized mourning and death ritual. The city-state was created precisely by limiting the autonomy of the kinship groups. Whether Solon's restrictions were effective is not easy to tell; Plato (*Republ*. X. 603e-604d), however, gives the impression that extravagant lamentation was still a current practice among the Athenians.

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[36]For the association between women's laments and revenge in ancient and modern Greece see Alexiou (1974, 21-23, 124-25), Holst-Warhaft (1992, 5-6, 75ff). A representative example in tragedy is the great kommos of *Cho*.

[37]The right to inherit was linked with that to mourn throughout antiquity: see Alexiou (1974, 19-21), Humphreys (1980, 98-99). In tragedy, the best example is Orestes' case in *Cho*. (see p. 184).

[38]From the above we can infer that in pre-Solonian times the *prothesis* was set in a public place, that it would last longer than a day (in Homer the *prothesis* of Hector and Achilles is extended for nine and seventeen days respectively: cf. *Il*. 24. 664-65, 784-87 and *Od*. 24. 63-65) and that the procession to the grave would take place during the day so as to attract attention to itself.

Gender Distinctions

Throughout Greek literature weeping is characteristic especially of women and, although males do lament, such behaviour was considered a sign of femininity. So in *Od.* 8. 521ff Odysseus' weeping as he hears the story of the Trojan horse is likened to that of a woman for her dead husband. In *Trach.* Heracles is found crying like a woman, as he is tortured by the poisoned robe: 1071-72 ὅστις ὥστε παρθένος βέβρυχα κλαίων, 1075 νῦν δ' ἐκ τοιούτου θῆλυς ηὕρημαι τάλας, and similarly in *Herc.* 1412 after the realization that he has killed his children and wife.[39] Plutarch in *Solon* 21. 5 reports that those who disobeyed Solon's laws would be punished because they indulged in unmanly and effeminate extravagances of sorrow (ὡς ἀνάνδροις καὶ γυναικώδεσι τοῖς περὶ τὰ πένθη πάθεσι καὶ ἁμαρτήμασιν ἐνεχομένους). Complementary to such evidence are abundant references to women's indulgence in lamentation, considered as an innate characteristic, e.g. *Aj.* 580 κάρτα τοι φιλοίκτιστον γυνή, *Med.* 928 γυνὴ δὲ θῆλυ κἀπὶ δακρύοις ἔφυ, Pollux *Onom.* VI. 202 γυναικεῖον γένος ἐστὶ θρηνῶδες καὶ φιλόθρηνον.

However, whereas in Homer tears were not derogatory for men, the attitude towards women's laments changes in later periods, when they are considered as a threat to the social order, undermining the unity of the *polis* (see Plut. *Solon* 21. 4 on p. 16).[40] In tragedy, female lamentation is exploited as a source of opposition between males and females, the individual and the ruling power (some representative examples are found in *Sept.*, *Ant.*, S. *El.*); Plato (*Repubᴉ.* III. 398e) insists that in an ideal state the lamenting modes should be banned as unprofitable for women who are respectable, let alone for men. Hence, the paradox is that whereas women's laments are considered a necessary part of the funerary rites, attempts are made to suppress them. The Greeks considered violent emotional displays not only a sign of femininity but also of barbarism, thus extravagances in mourning were often referred to as barbarian practices. So Plutarch (*Solon* 12. 5) mentions that Epimenides took away τὸ σκληρὸν καὶ βαρβαρικόν in which women used to indulge during mourning rites while Herodotus (VI. 58. 2) finds the way the Spartans lament at the funerals of their kings reminiscent of the customs of the barbarians in Asia.

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[39]For other examples of male weeping in tragedy see Segal (1993a, 64ff).

[40]See Segal (1993b, 64ff), McClure (1999, 40ff).

Although, then, iconographic and literary evidence suggests that women are less restrained in mourning than men, in Homer and tragedy there is a blurring of the gender distinction. So, for example, in Homer there is, famously, the reaction of Achilles, violent to the point of suicidal, to the news of Patroclus' death (*Il.* 18. 33-34) and, in tragedy, the passionate mourning of Xerxes and the Persian elders (*Pers.* 908ff), the devastation voiced by Creon (*Ant.* 1261ff) or the almost delicate pathos of Theseus' lament over the body of Phaedra (*Hipp.* 817ff). As regards the representation of such behaviour in the ambivalent performative context of tragedy where male performers acted in both male and female roles, the area of the theatre allowed the spectators to enjoy, without accusation of effeminacy, what was prohibited in real life.[41] One of the paradoxes of lamentation is its therapeutic effect on the mourners: τεταρπώμεσθα γόοιο, according to the Homeric formula (cf. *Il.* 23. 10, 98, 24. 513, *Od.* 11. 212),[42] and Athenian audiences, whether male or female, may have vicariously experienced that pleasure in the fictive community of the theatre.

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[41] I discuss this theme again when talking about the final scene of *Pers.* (see p. 162).

[42] Similar references in tragedy include S. *El.* 285-86 οὐδὲ γὰρ κλαῦσαι πάρα τοσόνδ' ὅσον μοι θυμὸς ἡδονὴν φέρει, *Andr.* 93-94 ἐμπέφυκε γὰρ γυναιξὶ τέρψις τῶν παρεστώτων κακῶν, E. *Supp.* 79-80 χάρις γόων πολύπονος, E. *El.* 126 πολύδακρυν ἀδονάν, *Tro.* 608 ὡς ἡδὺ δάκρυα τοῖς κακῶς πεπραγόσιν.

II. PRE-TRAGIC LAMENTS

1. HOMERIC LAMENTS

Iliad ends with the extensive lamentation delivered at Hector's *prothesis* and the subsequent burial (24. 719ff). As in some tragic plays (see pp. 67-68), lamentation comes naturally at the end of the poem after the accomplishment of the disaster, so that it provides emotional release. The *prothesis* and burial of the greatest hero from the Greek side, Achilles, is described, correspondingly, in the last book of *Odyssey*, in the context of the second *nekyia*, although there the formal lament is referred to briefly (24. 58-64). The lamentation at Patroclus' *prothesis* by Achilles and Briseis is also described, although discontinuously, since other events intervene in between (*Il*. 18. 314ff, 19. 282ff, 314ff), as well as the laments of Priam, Hecuba and Andromache (*Il*. 22. 416ff, 431ff, 477ff respectively), as they see Hector being dragged behind Achilles' chariot.

The formal lament for Hector in *Iliad* 24 is carried out by a group of singers (720 ἀοιδοί) and three soloists, Andromache, Hecuba and Helen, each time responded to by the collective wailing of the wider group of participants who attend the ceremony: 722, 746 ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες, 776 ἐπὶ δ' ἔστενε δῆμος ἀπείρων.[1] Both the singers and the named soloists are described as leaders of the dirge: 721 θρήνων ἐξάρχους, 723, 747, 761 (ἐξ)ῆρχε γόοιο,[2] although two different terms are used for it, θρῆνος and γόος respectively. Unlike γόος which is frequent in Homer,[3] θρῆνος is used only twice in the Homeric poems, the other case being *Od*. 24. 61 θρήνεον, with reference to the lament of the Muses for Achilles, here with the additional information that they sing in antiphonal response (24. 60 ἀμειβόμεναι).[4] It is reasonable to assume from these two passages that θρῆνος refers specifically to artistic

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[1]Such phrases are conventional in response to a solo lament (cf. also *Il*. 19. 301, 338, 22. 429, 515).

[2]This is a formulaic expression (cf. also *Il*. 18. 51, 316, 22. 430).

[3]As Wright (1986, 21 and n. 5) remarks, in Homer this term is not confined to laments, but is used to denote a variety of emotions, e.g. sadness, fear, even joy.

[4]Influenced obviously by this Homeric passage, in *Isth*. 8. 58 Pindar refers to the θρῆνος of the Muses for Achilles, characterized as πολύφαμος, 'of many voices'.

lament (cf. also *Od*. 24. 60-61 ὀπὶ καλῇ θρήνεον), as contrasted with γόος, which refers to the improvisations of the kinswomen.[5]

Scholars usually associate the ἀοιδοί mentioned in *Il*. 24. 720 with the practice of hiring mourners at funerals in antiquity, referring especially to *Cho*. 733 λύπη ἄμισθος, Plato *Laws* VII. 800e, Plut. *Solon* 21. 4 τὸ θρηνεῖν πεποιημένα;[6] similarly, in *Il*. 18. 339-42 the Trojan captive women are forced to mourn for Patroclus. At Achilles' *prothesis* the ἀοιδοί are substituted for the professional singers *par excellence*, the Muses, whose presence as well as that of the Nereids is proper to his semi-divine personality, so that "immortal gods and mortal men mourn together for him" (*Od*. 24. 64). Concerning the sex of the ἀοιδοί, there is a general agreement among scholars that they are males.[7] However, I think that the reference to the Muses in the passage in *Od*. as well as to female hired mourners in other ancient sources (see above), and generally the more prominent participation of women in *prothesis*-scenes, make it more probable that they are female.

The content of the θρῆνοι is not mentioned in either case, so we can only speculate about it. It is reasonable to assume that it did not have the personal character of the γόοι, so it could be a praise of the dead referring to their deeds[8] or a lament in more general terms.[9] We can suppose that it had a standard core which could be easily adapted to any particular occasion. Lucian *De Luctu* 20 refers to a θρήνων σοφιστήν who has gathered several old misfortunes (παλαιὰς συμφοράς) and leads the dirge while the rest of the people groan (although this late source may not be applicable to the Homeric case). The purpose of these professional performances was obviously to contribute to the splendour of the occasion and to stir the emotions of those present (cf. *Od*. 24. 61-62 ἔνθα κεν οὔ τιν' ἀδάκρυτόν γ' ἐνοήσας Ἀργείων· τοῖον γὰρ ὑπώρορε Μοῦσα λίγεια).

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[5]So also Reiner (1938, 4-6), Alexiou (1974, 11-13). By contrast, Maas (1936, 596) argues that θρῆνος was originally used to denote an inartistic expression of grief and that its use with reference to the compositions of Simonides and Pindar is late. More important is Peretti's observation (1939, 24) that θρῆνος refers explicitly to antiphonal performance whereas the γόοι are solos. In tragedy the two terms are used almost interchangeably (see p. 75).

[6]Cf. Koonce (1962, 50-51), Alexiou (1974, 10), Macleod (1982a, on 721-2), Richardson (1993, 352).

[7]Cf., for example, Hutchinson (1985, 191), Sourvinou-Inwood (1983, 39), Easterling (1991, 149), Shapiro (1991, 636), Segal (1993b, 57-58).

[8]So Reiner (1938, 62-63).

[9]So Harvey (1955, 169).

θρῆνος is differentiated from γόος in the mode of delivery as well: it is clearly sung whereas γόος is most probably between sung and spoken delivery, in fact closer to the latter, as is to be inferred from the verb ἔφατο and similar ones used with reference to it (cf. *Il.* 19. 301, 22. 429, 437, 515, 24. 746, 760, 776 ἔφατο, 18. 65 φωνήσασα, 18. 323 μετεφώνεε, 22. 476 ἔειπεν). However, the mode of delivery was evidently not usual speech, as is obvious from phrases such as ὣς ἔφατο κλαίων/κλαίουσα (cf. *Il.* 19. 301, 22. 429, 437, 24. 746), ὣς ὁ βαρὺ στενάχων μετεφώνεε (18. 323), γοόωσα...ἔειπεν (22. 476). In Homer no musical accompaniment is mentioned either for θρῆνος or γόος, but later literary and iconographical evidence makes it clear that it was the αὐλός (see pp. 15, 51).

The use of the verbs στενάχω and στένω to denote the wailing of the larger group of mourners suggests that it consisted of cries (such as those found in the tragic laments) or of whole phrases (probably similar to the refrain αἰαῖ Ἄδωνιν).[10] This antiphonal response comes always at the end of the lament, which, as Reiner (1938, 33) argues, makes reasonable the supposition that it does not represent a real life practice, since there the mourners would naturally repeatedly interrupt the soloist. From this point of view the tragic kommoi are more life-like, as their dramatic quality allows them to represent what the narrative convention of the epos could not.

The solo laments at Hector's *prothesis* are delivered by the three women closest to him, Andromache, Hecuba and Helen, whom he had met and conversed with in Book 6. They belong to the larger group of γυναῖκες who perform the choral wailing, out of which they arise (723, 747, 761 τῆσι) to deliver their γόοι,[11] which are strictly personal in tone and have the same three-part form: they start with an address to the dead man, continue with a narrative section which consists of a reference to the past or future and conclude with a renewed address.[12] Andromache delivers her lament while

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[10]See Reiner (1938, 31-33), Alexiou (1974, 134-35).

[11]Similarly, in *Il.* 18. 315-16 there is a choral wailing for Patroclus out of which Achilles' solo voice stands out (παννύχιοι Πάτροκλον ἀνεστενάχοντο γοῶντες. τοῖσι δὲ Πηλεΐδης ἀδινοῦ ἐξῆρχε γόοιο).

[12]As Alexiou (1974, 133-34) remarks, this form, which was not confined to laments but was shared by the *hymnos*, *enkomion* and *epitaphios* as well, was developed in all kinds of ritual poetry.

holding Hector's head in her arms, a gesture familiar from funerary vases.[13] The relationship of the three women to the dead Hector is stated in their very first address to him (cf. 725 ἄνερ, 748 πολὺ φίλτατε παίδων, 762 δαέρων πολὺ φίλτατε).[14]

Andromache's initial address to Hector is full of reproach for having left her a widow (725-26), which is renewed towards the end of her lament when she blames him for having brought grievous woes upon her (742),[15] in both cases with an implied parallelism between his and her fate (725 ἄνερ...με, 742 Ἕκτορ· ἐμοί). The self-lament and the emphasis on the suffering the dead man has brought to the living constitutes an indirect praise for him, since it points to his previous greatness and importance for those close to him.[16] By referring to Astyanax's doomed future (726ff) and the unspeakable grief of Hector's parents (741), Andromache praises him as protector of his family and the city and as hero in the battle (729ff, 736ff).[17] She concludes her lament contemplating a normal kind of consolation,[18] that if Hector had had a natural death in bed, he would have left her a word to remember him by (743-45).[19] Andromache's lament is strongly reminiscent, in phrasing and content, of her previous one in 22. 477ff, which also starts with an address to Hector, followed directly by a note of self-pity (ἐγὼ δύστηνος). With balanced phrases (478 σὺ μέν - 479 αὐτὰρ ἐγώ, 482 νῦν δέ - 483 αὐτὰρ ἐμέ) she likens her fate to his in the past and present, reproaching him for having left her a widow (483-84). Then she makes a long digression contemplating Astyanax's fate as an orphan, which is more optimistic than its equivalent in Book 24, since here

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[13]Cf., similarly, *Il.* 23. 136, 24. 711-12, 18. 71 where Thetis grasps Achilles' head in her hands while he is still alive (for the funerary associations of this scene see Kakridis 1949, 65ff). In *Il.* 18. 317 and 23. 18 Achilles lays his hands on Patroclus' breast before starting his lament.

[14]For the superlative degree in addressing the dead cf. also *Il.* 19. 287 πλεῖστον κεχαρισμένε θυμῷ, 19. 315 φίλταθ' ἑταίρων. It seems to have been a common feature in laments, hence Lucian's parody in *De Luctu* 13 τέκνον ᾥδιστον.

[15]For the phrasing of this line cf. 22. 422, as Priam mourns for Hector's death.

[16]That the deceased is special and a great loss is a commonplace in laments: cf. also Achilles in 19. 321ff, who states that he would not be so grief-stricken, as at Patroclus' death, even if he had heard that his father or son had died.

[17]Similarly, Hecuba in 22. 432ff praises Hector as the saviour of the Trojans, who regarded him almost as a god.

[18]On this see Richardson (1993, on 743-5).

[19]Cf. Priam's wish in 22. 426-28 that Hector had died in his arms, so that he could receive proper funerary rites.

she does not predict his death. Finally she returns to Hector's present situation (508 νῦν δέ),[20] his exposure without burial, thus commenting on his unnatural death, as at the end of her lament in Book 24.

Hecuba praises Hector as a man dear to the gods, evidenced in his unharmed appearance (749-50, 758-59), despite the maltreatment his body suffered at Achilles' hands. Her utterance is surprisingly controlled, including also a tone of malice that, despite his atrocious behaviour, Achilles did not manage to raise Patroclus from the dead (756). By contrast, in her γόος in 22. 431ff we find the most striking expression of the helplessness of the bereaved in the Homeric laments, τί νυ βείομαι αἰνὰ παθοῦσα, σεῦ ἀποτεθνηῶτος; (431-32).[21]

Helen, the third woman to mourn Hector, remembers his exceptional kindness towards her,[22] which was particularly important since she was unwelcome in Troy (767ff), thus justifying her self-lament together with his (773).[23] Self-reproach is implicit in her wish to have died before coming to Troy (764). Each of the three women comments on her personal loss, giving emphasis on a different aspect of Hector's personality. As Sourvinou-Inwood (1983, 39) puts it, the mourners articulate "the deceased's social persona." Similarly, Easterling (1991) argues that their role as mourners gives the women the opportunity to articulate some of the great issues of the poem. In particular, it is mostly in the context of suffering that women are given voice, exemplified in the case of Briseis whose only utterance is her lament for Patroclus in 19. 287-300.

The lamentation over Hector was foreshadowed in Book 6. 499-502 where Andromache leads the dirge among her maids while he is still alive, fearing that he will not escape the battle. Similarly, Achilles' *prothesis* in *Od.* 24 is reminiscent of the scene in *Il.* 18. 35ff. There Achilles' groans for Patroclus' death reach his mother deep in the sea, where she leads the dirge among the other Nereids (50ff). She does not know yet the reason of Achilles' present distress, but she laments in advance for his impending death, grieved especially because even his short life is full of sorrows. Thetis' lamentation for

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[20] νῦν δέ usually marks the transition from a digression to the past or future to the present, often accompanied by an address to the dead (cf. also *Il.* 18. 333, 19. 289, 319, 22. 436, 24. 757).

[21] On a parallelism between the lamenting scenes of Books 22 and 24 see Deichgräber (1972, 93ff).

[22] Similarly Briseis for Patroclus in 19. 287ff.

[23] Both Andromache and Helen recapitulate their utterance by stating why Hector is lamented so much (cf. 740, 773 τῶ).

Achilles while he is still alive may be the reason why she does not deliver a γόος at his *prothesis*, despite being present. Priam formally closes the lament for Hector in *Iliad* 24 by exhorting preparations for the burial (778-81).[24] He did not participate in it but expressed his grief for Hector's death in 22. 416ff.

Wright (1986, 36) argues that the γόοι at the *prothesis* are more tightly organized than those at the discovery of the death, which are less coherent because of the wilder emotion of the occasion. This is a reasonable remark and is certainly true for Hecuba's two laments (22. 431ff, 24. 748ff) and Priam's in 22. 416ff, but Andromache's two γόοι (22. 477ff, 24. 725ff) seem to be equally coherent; in fact the first, which is the longest of the γόοι so far discussed, has a longer narrative section than the second with an imaginary dialogue. In any case, the agitation at the discovery of the death is surely to account for the violent gestures performed by the mourner at that point, whereas they are absent from the *prothesis* contrary to iconographic representations of *prothesis*-scenes. So at the sight of the dead Hector dragged by Achilles' chariot Hecuba tears her hair and discards her veil (22. 405-7), Priam rolls in the dung (22. 414), Andromache loses consciousness so that her veil falls (22. 466-72). Similarly, at the news of Patroclus' death Achilles pours dust on his head[25] and falling on the ground tears his hair (18. 23-27), while Briseis, as soon as she sees him dead, scratches her breast and face (19. 284-85).

It is noticeable, however, that all the Homeric γόοι, whether they are delivered at the moment one is informed of the death or during the formal *prothesis*, are characterized by a relatively calm spirit, without the agitation very often found in tragic laments, expressed through a variety of means such as interjections and repetitions. However, we have to bear in mind that tragic poetry had a great variety of metrical schemes and modes of delivery to express various emotional situations, which epic poetry was lacking, so although it can probably give an accurate picture of the content of a lament in real life, it cannot depict its actual form. Concerning the content, the basic themes of the Homeric laments as discussed above, namely, address to the dead, contrast between dead - bereaved, praise - blame, digression from the present to past or future, expression of an unfulfilled wish, are also frequent in tragic laments, so it is reasonable to suppose that they have their origins in

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[24]As Sourvinou-Inwood (1983, 37) points out, there is a gender distinction between lamenting and burying, the first being the prerogative of women, the second of men.

[25]Cf., similarly, Laertes' reaction at the false news of Odysseus' death (*Od*. 24. 316-17).

ritual practice.[26] Concerning the form, the usual case in the Homeric laments is a solo delivery followed by the wailing of a group of mourners, which corresponds, in terms of a kommos, to the actor-chorus exchange, although there the chorus participates actively in contrast to its perfunctory, passive accompaniment in the Homeric γόοι. The lament of the Muses and the Nereids at Achilles' *prothesis* is represented in a couple of tragic laments in the exchange between two choruses, which, however, unlike the Homeric case, have an equal share in the lament. By contrast, the structure of the formal dirge over Hector, with the participation of three parties, the ἀοιδοί, the kinswomen and the other mourners, is not represented in the structure of kommoi. We can, however, see the former and the latter as combined to some extent in the tragic chorus whose role in different types of laments can be various.[27]

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[26]On the reworking of traditional material in the Homeric laments see Petersmann (1973).

[27]I discuss the influence of the Homeric on tragic laments in more detail in pp. 111ff, 134ff.

2. LYRIC LAMENTS

The Alexandrian scholars classified under the title *threnoi* some compositions of Simonides and Pindar. Unfortunately, only a few fragments have survived, so we are not in a position to form a complete picture about them as a literary genre. Their largely pessimistic or philosophical tone is justified by the context where they are cited (e.g. in order to exemplify gnomic statements of Stobaeus or a philosophical discussion about the immortality of the soul), so this is not proof that they did not deal with other subjects as well, as indeed some scattered evidence from other ancient authors, which I will discuss later, shows.

Another uncertainty concerning the lyric laments is the time of their performance. It would obviously vary according to individual pieces but it is more probable that they were performed some time after death,[1] and thus had lost the ritual associations of a threnos sung during the *prothesis*. Their tone of calm resignation or philosophical consideration suits better this case, too. On the other hand, Reiner (1938, 99) also remarks that there is evidence that Pindar could compose a song quickly, so that it would be possible to be performed within the three-day period between *prothesis* and *ekphora*. In any case, in view of the lack of specific evidence we can only speculate about the relationship of content and time to performative context.

Only a few of the lyric threnoi are clearly attested as such by ancient authors (for Simonides, for example, two of the five citations from Stobaeus), whereas for the rest the editors base their view on the context and the content of the fragments, according to what they think would best suit a threnos. However, there is always the danger that these criteria are not reliable, since passages with similar content can be found in other books as well (for example, the description of afterlife found in *Ol.* 2. 61ff is very much like similar accounts in the Pindaric fragments), and it is characteristic that there is disagreement among scholars concerning the attribution of some of them.[2] Page (1962, 272) shows his uncertainty about an absolute classification with his title: <ΘPHNOI ?>.

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[1] Reiner (1938, 98-99) refers to two such examples.

[2] Below I will refer to the fragments of the Simonidean threnoi as collected by Page (1962) and to those of Pindar as found in the Teubner edition of Maehler (1989).

Simonides

Simonides and Pindar are the only two of the nine lyric poets who are known to have written threnoi, and they were both famous for them in antiquity (cf., for example, Aristid. *Eteon. Epic.* 2 ποῖος ταῦτα Σιμωνίδης θρηνήσει, τίς Πίνδαρος ποῖον μέλος ἢ λόγον τοιοῦτον ἐξευρών;). Simonides' dirges especially were considered as the classical examples of threnoi in antiquity (cf. Catull. 38. 8 maestius lacrimis Simonideis, Horace *Carm.* II 1. 38 Ceae neniae),[3] superior to those of Pindar in view of the more vivid emotional quality they exhibit, as is emphasized in Dion. Hal. *De imitat.* II. 2. 6 πρὸς τούτοις, καθ' ὃ βελτίων (sc. Σιμωνίδης) εὑρίσκεται καὶ Πινδάρου, τὸ οἰκτίζεσθαι μὴ μεγαλοπρεπῶς ἀλλὰ παθητικῶς. Maas (1936, 596) supposes that Simonides was the creator of the threnos as a literary genre, as of the epinician.

The general tone of Simonides' extant threnoi is pessimistic. Prompted by specific cases, the poet reflects on general matters such as the instability and unpredictability of human life, stressing the complete dependence of mortals on the gods. The main purpose of these fragments is consolation, which arises in the thought that all men share the same lot.

Fragment 520 is quoted by Plutarch in his *Consol. ad Apoll.* (11. 107b), which is addressed to a father, trying to console him for the death of his son. The context where it is cited is that life is full of toils and pain, so we should consider the dead fortunate and not mourn them. Although it is not explicitly stated in Plutarch's text that it comes from a threnos, it is plausible to suppose so since the depiction of the weakness of mortals it gives, who, good and bad alike, are not able to escape death, would obviously serve as consolation to the relatives of the deceased.

Fragment 521 is quoted by Stobaeus (*Ecl.* IV. 41. 9) as indicative of how quickly the fortunes of mortals change. Its first two lines recur further on in the same chapter (IV. 41. 62), where Favorinus associates them with the dirge Simonides composed for the loss of the family of the Scopadae,[4] so it

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[3]Prof. Silk suggested to me that these are not necessarily references to Simonides' dirges; they could equally well refer to his plangent epigrams. In any case, phrases such as these emphasize the strong emotional quality of his poetry.

[4]The manner of their death was famous in antiquity: they were said to have perished when the hall where they were gathered collapsed while Simonides is reported to have just escaped. The story is mentioned in several ancient sources and narrated extensively in Cic. *De Orat.* II. 352-53 and Quintil. XI. 2. 11-16.

must be a part of that threnos, maybe the beginning, as Reiner (1938, 73) supposes. Although the extant fragment consists of a general reflection on the instability of mortal things, a narrative of the ruin of the Scopadae was also included in the threnos, as is made clear in Favorinus' report (διεξέρχεται τὴν τῶν Σκοπαδῶν ἀθρόαν ἀπώλειαν). This information is important since it lets us infer that the lyric threnoi could also include narrative of a death, a common theme in tragic laments (see pp. 116ff).

Fragments 522 and 524 are quoted by Stobaeus under his chapter Περὶ θανάτου (IV. 51. 5 and 7 respectively), so we suppose that they come from threnoi, although he is silent about it. In 522 Death is described with the striking phrase δασπλῆτα Χάρυβδιν, i.e. 'all-embracing'; not even those who possess virtue and wealth can escape it. 524 must belong to a threnos for a soldier who fell in battle, and the consolation it offers to his relatives is that death can equally well come upon somebody who has escaped battle.

In fragment 523 Simonides uses myth to offer consolation: not even the demi-gods can escape toils and death, which is the reality all mortals are subject to.[5] Consolation through the use of myth is a device used by Pindar as well, so we can suppose that it was frequent in lyric threnoi, as in the tragic ones (see p. 125).

For fragments 525-27 there is no explicit evidence that they belong to threnoi. Their classification under this title is possible only on the basis of their content, recalling the pessimistic tone of the other Simonidean fragments.

Fragment 531, which refers to the death of those who fought in Thermopylae, is an exception among the others as far as its tone is concerned: no pessimistic thoughts about human matters but only glorification of the dead and felicitation of their good fortune. Diodorus Siculus who quotes it (XI. 11. 6) defines it as ἐγκώμιον, a term which, according to Campbell (1967, 383), can hardly be used in its technical sense; it is probably a hymn sung at a commemorative ceremony in honour of the dead. One infers that Page (1962) included it in his collection of the Simonidean threnoi because the terms threnos and encomium were more or less similar in meaning, as is evidenced in several ancient sources,[6] but since it is so different from the other Simonidean threnoi, it is probably best not included among them.

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[5]For a similar statement cf. *Alc.* 989-90.

[6]For example, Ammonius *De vocab. differ.* 178 ὀδυρμὸν γὰρ ἔχει σὺν ἐγκωμίῳ τοῦ τελευτήσαντος, Aristid. *Eteon. Epic.* 3 ἀλλά τι καὶ κόσμου τῷ θρήνῳ προσέσται.

Pindar

If the dominant mood in the Simonidean fragments is pessimistic, in the Pindaric ones it is optimistic, as they describe a happy existence after death for those who lived their life on earth piously or were initiated into the mysteries, by referring to Eleusinian and Orphic doctrines about afterlife and the immortality of the soul.[7]

Fragment 128c is quoted by the scholiast on E. *Rhes*. 895, where the Muse starts her dirge for her dead son by defining it as a 'genuine *ialemos*' (ἰαλέμῳ αὐθιγενεῖ). Its quotation at this point as well as its content indicate that it is part of a threnos. It starts by juxtaposing to paeans and dithyrambs, songs associated with the joy of life, the songs of death,[8] and continues with a reference to the three sons of Calliope who died at a young age and gave their names to three types of song: *linos*, *hymenaios*, *ialemos*. As Cannatà Fera (1990, 143-44) argues, the function of myth in this song must be consolatory: even the sons of a Muse were subject to the fate which is common to all mortals, while the specific reference to mythic premature deaths lets us suppose that the deceased was young and that the threnos was ordered by/addressed to his parents (thus the reference to the Muse who lost her sons would be more appropriate to the occasion).

Similarly, the reference to the death of Oenomaus, the son of Ares, in fragment 135 can be explained as a means of consolation, in the sense that it emphasizes the inescapability of death even for the mighty and those with divine origin.[9]

Fragment 129 is quoted by Plutarch in his *Consol. ad Apoll*. 35. 120c, where he reassures the father that his departed son will now enjoy a happy existence, free from toils. That it belongs to a threnos is proved by the phrase which follows immediately afterwards, καὶ μικρὸν προελθὼν ἐν ἄλλῳ θρήνῳ,

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[7]The question whether the poet shared these views himself or just reported the religious beliefs of his clients cannot be answered with certainty. It is more probable, however, as Farnell (1930-32, I. 337-38) argues, that he was not initiated into any of the mysteries, but had a general idea of the Eleusinian and Orphic doctrines, so as to use them in order to console the relatives of the dead with posthumous hope.

[8]In tragedy laments are frequently contrasted to paeans (see p. 77).

[9]For this common consolatory theme see also Lattimore (1942, 218, 253-54).

after which fragments 131a-b are cited.[10] Before Pindar similar depictions of afterlife are found in *Od*. 4. 563-69 (Elysium) and Hes. *Erga* 167-73 (Isles of the Blessed). However, in these cases the privileged are heroes of divine origin, who enjoy happiness in the afterlife irrespective of the moral quality of their life on earth, whereas in Pindar privilege among the dead is allocated according to moral criteria (Plutarch's phrasing which introduces this fragment is clearly about εὐσέβεια).[11] This fragment is also reminiscent of the eschatological account in *Ol*. 2. 68ff, although there the condition of eternal bliss is reserved for those who have proved themselves worthy in more than one life, whereas here there is no such indication. However, we should not seek a consistent description of the afterlife in Pindar's works; it is reasonable to suppose that his accounts of it might be different according to context.[12] So in a threnos the best way of consolation would be to assure the survivors that the deceased, who was a righteous person, had gained a life superior to the one he lost.

Fragment 130 is considered to be a continuation of 129. It is reported by Plutarch in his treatise *De latenter vivendo* 7. 1130c, where, after the quotation of the first three lines of 129, "τοῖσι λάμπει...ἐνὶ λειμώνεσσι", he describes in prose the idealized place where the blessed spend their time and then he mentions 'the third way', which is clarified by fragment 130. There is no mention there that it is Pindaric but, as Farnell argues (1930-32, II. 434), since it continues the eschatological account of fragment 129, which is clearly attested as Pindaric, we are right to suppose that it comes from the same author, although not necessarily from the same threnos. The description of this horrible place would serve as further consolation for the relatives of the deceased since they would be sure that he did not belong to this category. The problem that arises with this fragment is that it talks about a third way along which the souls of the sinful pass to eternal darkness, while in 129 there is reference to only one other location for the souls of the pious. Which is the third category of souls and the place they are led to? The answer to this

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[10]Whether this phrase suggests that it belongs to a different threnos from the fragments cited afterwards is disputed. For different views see Wilamowitz (1922, 498), Farnell (1930-32, II. 434), Cannatà Fera (1990, 183-85).

[11]The view of some scholars, e.g. Reiner (1938, 85), Solmsen (1968, 505), that it is about initiation is not justified by the text.

[12]Cf., for example, the negative descriptions of Hades with a gloomy and dark atmosphere given in *Ol*. 14. 20-21, frs 143, 207.

question is much disputed, often also related to the eschatological account of *Ol*. 2, and I will not discuss it here.[13]

Fragment 131a is difficult to interpret since the text is uncertain. According to Plutarch's text (*Consol. ad Apoll*. 35. 120d), its last word is τελευτάν but one of the mss gives τελετάν. If we accept the first reading, λυσίπονος refers to death which releases from toil; if the second, it refers to the mystery rites which release from toil in the afterlife. Although it is difficult to decide between the two, I think that the context in which Plutarch cites it favours the first reading: the father should consider his departed son fortunate because he has escaped the toils of life.

The themes handled in fragment 131b are the immortality of the soul, its divine origin and the divine function of dreams, so here we find for the first time the conception of the dual nature of man.[14] Although in the epinician odes Pindar accepts the Homeric conception of the dream (it arises from an external intervention), and not infrequently it is treated in a negative way, in this fragment it comes from the gods, an Orphic idea according to Reiner (1938, 87), and has a serious function: through it the soul foresees the future. Certainly the idea that one part of man does not die with mortal death but partakes in divinity would be appropriate consolation.

Fragment 133 can be classified under *threnoi* only on the basis of its content since Plato who quotes it (*Menon* 81b-c) does not tell from what kind of poem it comes. The context in which it is cited concerns the doctrines of the immortality of the soul and metempsychosis. Scholars often emphasize the marked resemblance between this passage and a fragment from the Καθαρμοί of Empedocles (B 146) as well as *Ol*. 2. 68ff, with minor variations in each case. An important notion in this fragment is Persephone's grief (πένθος), which refers to the killing of her son Dionysus by the Titans, from whose ashes the human race sprang, when they were destroyed by the thunderbolts of Zeus. Therefore, men have to give satisfaction to Persephone for their original sin, which consists most probably of rites of purification. Some people succeed in satisfying her and are rewarded with a superior existence while the rest will probably come back to an inferior life and undergo the same procedure when they die.[15] In view of the importance assigned to

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[13]For some views see Reiner (1938, 85-86), Cannatà Fera (1990, 170-72), Willcock (1995, 171-72).

[14]A similar idea is found in the proem of *Nem*. 6. 1-7, where Pindar proclaims a general kinship between man and the gods.

[15]For an extensive discussion of this fragment see Rose (1936).

βασιλῆες it has been suggested that the person for whose honour this threnos was written was a king, specifically Gelon.[16]

The interpretation of fragment 134 depends on the meaning of the adjective εὐδαίμων. Farnell (1930-32, II. 436) suggests that it denotes "the righteous after death", while Cannatà Fera (1990, 195ff), noticing that the adjective used in the 5th century to refer to the blessed after death is not εὐδαίμονες but μακάριοι, prefers to take it in its pregnant meaning, i.e. ὁ εὖ τὸν δαίμονα διακείμενον ἔχων, in which case the meaning is that ὄλβος can be ensured for mortals only with the aid of the gods. Since this fragment comes from a threnos (as is explicitly stated by Stobaeus), Cannatà Fera continues, we are allowed to suppose that the happiness given to mortals by the gods will continue after death as well, an appropriate consolation for the relatives of the deceased.

That fragment 136a belongs to a threnos is obvious from the context: Aristides mourns for the premature death of a boy and quotes it (*Eteon. Epic.* 12) to exemplify his grief. The verb ἀνακαλεῖ is clearly an apostrophe to the deceased, a traditional theme of lamentation found in Homer and in tragedy but not in the extant Pindaric and Simonidean threnoi. The motif of nature participating in the grief of somebody's death is also found in the tragic laments (cf. *P.V.* 406-435, *Tro.* 827-32) and is frequently attested in the literature of the Alexandrian era as well (e.g. Bion's *Epitaph. Adon.* 31ff, the opening of the *Epitaph. Bion.* attributed to Moschus).

In 136b we have a reference to a threnos written for a young man newly married, where Pindar praises his virtues (praise of the deceased is a recurrent theme in the Homeric laments).

Fragment 137 is in essence a μακαρισμός, referring to those initiated in the Eleusinian mysteries. As Cannatà Fera (1990, 207-9) argues, the reference to the end of life and the beginning of a new one must be eschatological, i.e. referring to the life after death, which is the true one and more enjoyable than that on earth.[17] It has been suggested that this fragment belongs to the threnos Pindar composed for Hippocrates, although, as Reiner (1938, 94) argues, it cannot be proved.

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[16]See Reiner (1938, 90). Objections to this view are presented by Rose (1936, 93).

[17]ὑπὸ χθόνα does not actually allow us to suppose, as Reiner (1938, 95) does, that the reference is metaphorical, denoting the passing from the life of common mortals to that of the initiated.

It is clear that the Simonidean and Pindaric threnoi have very little to do with the ritual laments for the dead (γόοι) found in Homer. There the relatives of the deceased express their personal grief for the loss of their loved one, whereas here the dirge is composed by an outsider and is addressed to them. The distance from personal involvement and, most probably, from the time of the death, allows for a more accepting, philosophical tone. We can suppose that the lyric threnoi were similar in content to the threnos of the ἀοιδοί in *Iliad* 24 (they are both composed by non-relatives), but since we do not know anything specific about the latter, the similarity remains speculative.[18] The Homeric γόοι are obviously a more direct source of influence on the tragic laments since they exhibit the personal feelings of the mourners and their relation to the deceased. However, the nature of tragic laments is diverse, so we can also trace the influence of the lyric threnoi on them, although we cannot evaluate it fully since only a few fragments have survived.[19] However, despite the fact that the extant threnoi of Simonides and Pindar do not offer expressions of personal grief, it is probable that there were popular laments at that time which bore a greater resemblance to the Homeric γόοι, and could have influenced tragic kommoi as well, as Sappho's lament for Adonis might imply (fr. 140 Lobel - Page, *PLF*). In this distich there is antiphony between a chorus and a soloist: the chorus ask for help in expressing their grief and the soloist answers by instructing them to beat themselves and tear their garments. This exchange is strongly reminiscent of a tragic kommos where both participants are united in grief.

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[18]Therefore, I think that one should be cautious in drawing, as Harvey (1955, 169, 172) and Alexiou (1974, 12-13) do, a connection between them.

[19]For an examination of the influence of the Homeric and lyric laments on the tragic ones see *passim* under 'Themes' and 'Other Tragic Laments', especially pp. 111ff, 120ff, 128ff, 136ff.

PART ONE: GENERAL CONSIDERATION OF *KOMMOI* AND OTHER TRAGIC LAMENTS

I. DEFINITION OF *KOMMOS*

In the 12th chapter of *Poetics* 1452b 22-25 Aristotle classifies the choral parts of tragedy under three headings, the πάροδος, the στάσιμον and the κομμός, the latter defined as a θρῆνος κοινὸς χοροῦ καὶ ἀπὸ σκηνῆς. This is the first use of κομμός as a technical term to denote a specific type of tragic lament. In tragedy the word appears only once, *Cho.* 423 ἔκοψα κομμόν, where it is defined etymologically by the beating (κόπτεσθαι) of breast and head performed in the passionate manner of an oriental dirge. There is no occurrence of the word κομμός in the tragic scholia where θρῆνος is used instead, while some attempts from late antiquity[1] to classify the parts of tragedy distinguish the choral ones, influenced obviously by Aristotle, as παροδικά, στάσιμα and κομματικά. Tzetzes *De tragica poesi* 66-67 contrasts κομμός and θρῆνος: κομμὸς δὲ θρήνου πενθικώτερον πλέον, ὁ θρῆνος ἐστὶ δ' ἠρεμέστερον μέρος, while some ancient writers use it simply in the sense of 'lamentation for the dead', as Bion *Epitaph. Adon.* 97 λῆγε γόων Κυθέρεια τὸ σάμερον, ἴσχεο κομμῶν and *Suid.* s.v. κομμός: ἠγεῖτο γυναικῶν μυρία πληθὺς μετὰ κομμοῦ καὶ ὀλολυγῆς. τουτέστι, γόου καὶ ὀδυρμοῦ.

The limited attestation of the word κομμός in antiquity and the lack of adequate evidence concerning its meaning and use have led modern scholars to apply it to different passages, from lyric exchanges accompanied by physical manifestations of grief (in accordance with the reference in *Cho.* 423ff)[2] to all lyric exchanges between chorus-actor irrespective of content[3] and to all kinds of lyric dialogues.[4] However, the Aristotelian definition makes clear that the term should be limited to lyric exchanges between chorus and actor(s) which are dirges. It is a sub-category of lyric dialogues, and I think that Taplin (1977, 474) is right in arguing that it should not be extended to all of them regardless of their content, just because Aristotle does not use any alternative term.

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[1] Listed in Taplin (1977, 471).

[2] Diehl (1921, 1196) argues that the use of the term κομμός is properly restricted to such exchanges between chorus and actor while Popp (1971, 237) uses it for exchanges of any kind.

[3] This use of κομμός is adopted by most scholars. See, for example, the list of 'kommoi' in Cornford (1913, 43) and the use of the word by Jebb in his commentaries (*passim*) on the plays of Sophocles.

[4] Cf., for example, Lucas (1968, on 52b 24), McDevitt (1981, 19, n.1).

In *Poet.* 1452b 17-18 Aristotle differentiates κομμοί and τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς which are limited to some plays (ἴδια) from the πάροδος and the στάσιμον which are common to all of them (κοινά). He does not define τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς, as he defines κομμοί, but scholars generally agree that this term includes all the songs of the actors, solos, duos or, more rarely, trios. In view of the lack of specific terms from antiquity for the several kinds of lyric dialogues, several suggestions have been made by modern scholars, not always satisfactory. So Diehl (1921, 1197ff) classifies under κομμοί the threnetic chorus-actor exchanges, under μέλη ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς the lyrics shared by actors and under ἀμοιβαῖα the non-threnetic chorus-actor exchanges.[5] The term ἀμοιβαῖον is ancient, used to denote any kind of dialogue, spoken or sung, in epic and lyric poetry as well as in drama.[6] Popp (1971, 221-22) uses it with reference to those tragic dialogues which are entirely or partly lyric (epirrhematic),[7] and recommends its use instead of κομμός and μέλος ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς because it is a more general and neutral term, whereas they cannot be used for a systematic description of the amoibaic form.[8] I agree with Popp that a general term to embrace all types of lyric dialogues is needed, so I will use ἀμοιβαῖον in that sense and κομμός as a sub-category of it denoting the threnetic exchanges between chorus and actor. Under κομμοί I will also include *Sept.* 875-1004[9] and E. *Supp.* 1123-1164, although they are threnetic exchanges between semi-choruses and choruses respectively, since they belong to the choral parts of tragedy (τὸ χορικόν) but do not come under either the πάροδος or the στάσιμον.[10]

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[5]Broadhead (1960, 310) also uses the term ἀμοιβαῖον in this way.

[6]Popp (1971, 221, n. 3) gives a list of its occurrences in ancient sources.

[7]For the term ἐπίρρημα see Popp (1971, 222), Taplin (1977, 86, n. 2). It was used in ancient sources to denote some spoken parts of the comic parabasis. Zielinski (1885) extended it to embrace the exchanges of comedy and tragedy where lyric passages alternate with spoken, while its application to tragedy was established by Kranz (1933) and Peretti (1939), who both argued that its origin lay in an epirrhematic structure.

[8]Popp (1971), however, falls into inconsistencies, as in his classification of the amoibaia he uses terms such as 'astrophisch-dochmische Euripideische Epirrhematikon', 'threnetischen Amoibaia', which indicate a confusion in the choice of his criteria, in some cases according to the structural-metrical form of the amoibaia, in others according to their content.

[9]My assumption is that this passage is exclusively choral (see my discussion in pp. 168ff).

[10]Diehl (1921, 1199-1200) classifies them under ἀμοιβαῖα and μέλη ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς respectively, which is in both cases irreconcilable with his own use of the terms.

The 12th chapter of *Poetics* has often been considered spurious, mainly because the definitions of some of its technical terms are inapplicable to 5th cent. tragedy and because it interrupts the continuity between chapters 11 and 13.[11] The problem with the Aristotelian definition of κομμός is that in surviving 5th cent. tragedy there are many lyric exchanges between chorus and actor which do not have a threnetic character. Dale (1969, 35), defending the genuineness of chapter 12, argues that Aristotle gives general definitions, without being concerned for complete accuracy. Bywater (1909, 206) defends it using another line of argument, that in his *Poetics* Aristotle had in mind the theatre of his own time, a view Cornford (1913, 41) accepts, arguing (44) in addition that κομμός is "a term which belongs to the theatre of the fourth century and to a date at which the tendency to limit amoebaean composition to *Threnoi* had gone so far that the two were practically or absolutely coextensive."[12] This seems to be a probable supposition, especially in view of the fact that there is an increasing tendency towards threnetic chorus-actor exchanges from Aeschylus to Euripides.[13] Cornford may be right in his line of argumentation, but the assumption that *Poet.* refers to the theatrical conditions of Aristotle's time should not be taken too far since it can be easily refuted by the counter-argument that Aristotle uses examples of the 5th as well as of the 4th cent. drama to illustrate his statements. I think that we should accept, like most modern scholars, the authenticity of this passage, allowing that Aristotle has in mind the theatre of his own time as well as of the 5th cent., but also taking into account that *Poet.* is in part a practical treatise, thus he is justified in making general or elliptical statements.

Having defined which exchanges I will consider under *kommoi*, I turn to the definition of their 'threnetic character'. The tragedians exploit fully the traditional custom of lamentation for the dead, extending it to cases beyond bereavement so as to embrace a great variety of human suffering, mental or

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[11]Else (1957a, 360, n. 1) mentions some scholars who have proposed the deletion of this chapter and others who accept its authenticity, arguing himself (360ff) for the first.

[12]He argues further (44) that the word κομμός was used probably because θρῆνος already denoted a particular type of lyric composition, and refutes (45) strongly the use of this term for the amoibaic passages of the 5th cent. drama. On the other hand, Masqueray (1895, 17) argues that kommos was originally a threnetic song, employed later for any violent emotion.

[13]So in the extant complete plays of Aeschylus 10 out of some 21 amoibaia are kommoi, in Sophocles the corresponding figures are 12 out of 20 and in Euripides 33 out of 58. Cornford (1913, 44) reaches the same conclusion about the increasing number of kommoi in the three tragedians, although the figures he presents are not accurate.

physical, referring to the past or present or anticipated in the future. Therefore, in my discussion of kommoi I will include passages where lamentation comes as a reaction to any kind of suffering. Such a wide definition is no doubt subject to objections as to whether a passage should be classified as a *threnos* or not, so I will try to define further the 'threnetic character' by means of specific structural, metrical, linguistic and thematic features. However, I will refrain from classifying kommoi under certain headings pointing to any of the above aspects, since I find any such attempts unsuccessful and confusing.[14]

As Popp (1971, 224-25) remarks, a clear delimitation of kommoi (and of amoibaia in general) from the surrounding dialogue is not always possible, especially when they are astrophic epirrhematic exchanges, since the preceding and following verses can be considered as part of them (introduction or conclusion). So the verse-numbers I have given for them differ in some cases from those of Diehl (1921, 1197, 1199) or Cornford (1913, 43) or Popp (1971, *passim*). Comparing my list with that of Diehl, I have included *Cho*. 973-1043 and *Rhes*. 728-755,[15] which I consider as epirrhematic compositions;[16] *Rhes*. 895-914; the parodoi of *P.V*.,[17] *Med*. and E. *El*.; *O.C*. 510-548; S. *El*. 1398-1421, *Herc*. 749-762; *Sept*. 875-1004, E. *Supp*. 1123-1164.[18] On the other hand, I omit *Trach*. 863-895, *Heracl*. 73-110, E. *Supp*. 990-1033, *Pho*. 291-354. *Trach*. 863ff consist mainly of the questions of the chorus and the answers

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[14]Cf., for example, the terms Cornford (1913, 44) uses to describe the different categories of kommoi (e.g. 'threnos', 'quasi-threnos', 'inverted threnos'). Even more confusing is the way Koonce (1962) and Wright (1986) examine different kinds of tragic laments under the same criteria, since obviously each one of them serves different purposes, as well as the terms they apply to them (e.g. Koonce distinguishes, among others, between 'partial laments', 'imperfect laments', 'laments for an anticipated death', 'monologues expressing grief for the dead'), since there is no consistency in the choice of their criteria, some referring to the structure of the lament, some to its content and others to the occasion by which it is prompted.

[15]I include *Rhes*. in my discussion of the Euripidean plays. Ritchie (1964) has argued, persuasively I think, for its authenticity.

[16]As Popp (1971, 224, 274) argues, the anapaestic sections in these exchanges have the function of lyric parts, in the passage of *Cho*. substituting for a strophic pair. In the case of *Rhes*. this argument is reinforced by the doric α in τύχα (728).

[17]I treat *P.V*. as an Aeschylean play despite acknowledging the problem of its authenticity, for which see Griffith (1977), Taplin (1977, 460-69).

[18]For my classification of these choral exchanges under kommoi see p. 37.

of the nurse about Deianeira's death,[19] which, however, do not include signs of personal grief or agitation, so I do not consider this passage as a kommos (nor, for the same reasons, *Heracl.* 73ff). Nor do I consider as threnoi passages like E. *Supp.* 990ff, *Pho.* 291ff, which, despite their soon revealed ironic or ominous implications, are seemingly an expression of exultation or joy (cf., similarly, *Bacch.* 1168ff, *Tro.* 308ff, *I.A.* 1475ff). Barner (1971, 279) defines as monody any sung utterance of an actor with a relatively great length and independence, so he includes in his list of monodies (279-80) passages such as *Aj.* 394-427, *Phil.* 1081-1162, *Hipp.* 817-851, *Andr.* 1173-1196, *Hel.* 164-178, 191-210, which form parts of kommoi. Despite the monodic quality of these and similar passages I will consider as monodies only those lyric utterances of an actor which are not part of a larger exchange and are not interrupted by the chorus or another actor (see Appendix III).

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[19]Alexiou (1974, 137-38) argues that such questions are an integral part of the structure of laments, although most of the passages she cites (232, n. 16) I would not define as such.

II. GENERAL FEATURES OF *KOMMOI*

1. STRUCTURE

The form each dramatist chooses for his kommoi is usually illustrative of his general technique in structuring his lyrics. So in the strophic kommoi the number of pairs normally varies from one to three with the exception of some long Aeschylean compositions, e.g. seven pairs in *Pers.* 931-1065 and *Ag.* 1072-1177, ten in *Cho.* 315-475. The pattern in *Eum.* 778-891 is unusual in that strophe and antistrophe of both pairs are identical word for word, which, as Sommerstein (1989, 240) argues, indicates in the best possible way the stubborn resistance of the Erinyes to Athena's attempts at persuasion. Several lyric kommoi conclude with an epode (cf. *Pers.* 1066-1077, *Sept.* 989-1004, S. *El.* 233-250, *Ant.* 876-882, *Phil.* 1169-1217, E. *Supp.* 824-837, *Hel.* 229-252). For Sophocles, who does not favour astrophic composition,[1] the long epode in *Phil.* 1169-1217 functions as astrophon,[2] so that in this kommos he combines the strophic with the astrophic form. Ephymnia (refrains) are frequently used in the Aeschylean lyrics, reinforcing their ritual character (see p. 100), hence their use in his kommoi as well (cf. *Sept.* 975-77=986-88, *Ag.* 1455-61, 1489-96=1513-20, 1537-50). In the case of *Ag.* the first and third ephymnia are not repeated, like the middle one, after the antistrophe, which, as Fraenkel (1950, III. 661) argues, shows that additional weight is given to the central part of the kommos (1481-1529), which with the repetition of the cry ἰὼ ἰὼ βασιλεῦ βασιλεῦ is essentially a θρῆνος for the dead king.

Lyric kommoi

Alternation in lyrics usually denotes a close emotional identification between the participants, whether they sing in unison (e.g. *Pers.* 1002-1077, *Sept.* 875-1004, E. *Supp.* 798-837, *Hel.* 164-252) or there is some disagreement between them (e.g. *Pers.* 931-1001, S. *El.* 121-250, *Phil.* 1081-1217). In the strophic lyric kommoi we can distinguish three types of stanzas:

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[1] The only astrophic amoibaion in his extant complete plays is *Trach.* 871-895.

[2] Similarly the only other such epode in his extant plays, *O.C.* 208-253.

a) undivided without change of speaker (that is, each stanza is attributed to a different participant): *Cho*. 306-455, *Hel*. 164-252.
b) single division of the stanzas between the participants, usually two in number: *Pers*. 931-1001, *Sept*. 875-960, *Ag*. 1114-1177, S. *El*. 121-250, *Ant*. 839-875, *Phil*. 1081-1168, E. *Supp*. 1123-1137, E. *El*. 167-212, 1206-1232, *Tro*. 1287-1301, or, more rarely, three: *Cho*. 456-465, E. *El*. 1177-1205.
c) multiple division of the stanzas: *Pers*. 1002-1077, *Sept*. 961-1004, S. *El*. 823-870, *Phil*. 1169-1217, *O.C*. 510-548, 1670-1750, *Andr*. 1197-1225, E. *Supp*. 798-837, 1138-1164, *Tro*. 153-196, 1302-1332, *Or*. 140-207.

The structure of the stanzas in the first two types is associated with a calmer exchange between the participants than in the third type, where the lively dialogue arising from the multiple division suggests strong agitation. So, for example, the single division of the stanzas in the parodos of S. *El*. in contrast to the multiple division in 823ff differentiates the calmer lamentation for Agamemnon who died long ago from the agitated lament for the recently received news of Orestes' supposed death. Often the structure of the stanzas does not remain the same throughout the kommos. Interesting, and more frequent, is the case of kommoi which start with stanzas divided into two and continue with multiple division, which indicates increasing agitation: *Pers*. 931-1077, *Sept*. 875-1004, *Phil*. 1081-1217, E. *Supp*. 1123-1164, *Tro*. 1287-1332 (here we could also include *Andr*. 1173-1225, although its first part is epirrhematic). All the above examples (with the exception of *Phil*.) are laments for the dead (in *Pers*. and *Tro*. lamentation concerns a wider catastrophe as well), so the repetition of the same pattern strongly suggests that it has its origins in ritual practice (see pp. 59ff).

Epirrhematic kommoi

The prevailing types of epirrhema consist of spoken iambic trimeters and recitative anapaests.[3] The oldest and most common type of trimeter epirrhema is a group of 1-5 trimeters, a characteristic example of which is *Pers*. 256-289. The pattern of this kommos is as follows: a messenger arrives announcing the Persian defeat (249-55), and in the subsequent exchange he reveals the extent of the disaster in epirrhemas of two trimeters amid the chorus' lamenting stanzas. The different modes of delivery reflect the

[3]For the different types of epirrhema see Popp (1971, 230-32).

different emotional situation of the two participants: the chorus lament while the messenger reports, although he is himself agitated (cf. his emotional utterance in his last couplet, 284-85). Similarly, in *Ag*. 1072-1113 (the first four pairs of the kommos) the alternation of Cassandra's lyrics with the two trimeter-epirrhema of the coryphaeus contrasts effectively the calmness of the Elders with her agitation. By contrast, the sharing of the lyrics by both participants from the fifth pair onwards shows that the Elders are emotionally affected by Cassandra's utterances, although they still cannot grasp their full meaning, so they express their premonitions of catastrophe.

The lyric-epirrhematic alternation is also used to convey a conflict of views, as in *Eum*. 778-891 and *Ag*. 1448-1576, where the actor delivers long epirrhematic rheseis, in the first case iambic, in the second anapaestic. In *Eum*. 778ff the epirrhematic exchange reflects the contrast between the emotional situation of the Erinyes, who are angry with the younger gods for Orestes' acquittal and threaten to destroy Attica, and Athena's argumentative power, who tries to persuade them to stay as benevolent powers. In *Ag*. 1448ff the clash between the two participants extends to the point where Clytemnestra denies the chorus their right to mourn for their dead king, stating with audacity that she will bury him without the honours due to the dead (1551ff). Similarly, in *Alc*. 861-934 Admetus, the closest relative of the dead, delivers anapaests while the chorus lyric verses, but in this case he recites the actual lament while they try to comfort him. However, as Wright (1986, 115) speculates, it is possible, given the similarity in form with *Ag*. 1448ff, that the alternation of anapaests from the actor and lyrics from the chorus expresses "Admetus' vanity and lack of concern for Alcestis". The anapaestic epirrhema does not necessarily convey a clash of views, as in *Cho*. 306-422 (see my extensive discussion in pp. 187ff) and the parodos of *P.V*. where, as Brown (1977, 62, n. 20) puts it, it expresses "the perceptible distance between the guarded sympathy of the Okeanids and Prometheus' single-minded self-pity".

The most common type of epirrhema in Sophocles is a group of two trimeters following a stanza and/or one or two trimeters within the stanza (inner epirrhema, a form used mainly by Sophocles and only occasionally by Euripides).[4] The inner epirrhema in the Sophoclean amoibaia is in strophic responsion, so it becomes essentially part of the stanza, which is thus multiply divided as in the pure lyric amoibaia, and so resulting in a lively dialogue. The inner epirrhema is in sharper contrast with the surrounding

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[4]For the inner epirrhema in Sophocles see Popp (1971, 250ff).

lyric sections than the normal type, as it falls within the stanza. It appears in 11 Sophoclean amoibaia including *Aj.* 364-376=379-391, 879-914=925-960, *Ant.* 1261-1277=1284-1300, 1306-1325=1328-1347.[5] The short epirrhemas of one or two trimeters function in two different ways in the Sophoclean kommoi. When a character arrives as a messenger (*Aj.* 891ff, *Ant.* 1277ff) his utterances and the subsequent questioning by his partner are in iambic trimeters according to the norm of a messenger report. However, in other cases (*Aj.* 348ff, *O.T.* 1313ff, *Ant.* 1261ff) the utterances of the coryphaeus (in the first case of Tecmessa as well) serve as a foil to the hero's suffering. The brief, trite iambic statements of the former throw into sharp relief the passionate lamenting utterances of the latter. This type of trimeter epirrhema is associated with a negative attitude towards the hero, as in *Aj.* disagreement with Ajax's desire to die or in *O.T.* disapproval of Oedipus' boldness in blinding himself.

Among Euripidean amoibaia, a particular category are those in which an extended monodic utterance is interrupted briefly, usually by an iambic distich from the coryphaeus. Among them belong the strophic kommoi *Hipp.* 817-851, *Andr.* 1173-1196, *Rhes.* 895-914 and the astrophic *Hec.* 1056-1108.[6] The choice of monodic form is appropriate to express the grief of a single individual, while the brief epirrhema of the coryphaeus does not spoil the monodic effect. His calm iambic statements are contrasted with the passionate lyrics of the actor, thus indicating a certain emotional distance from his suffering, despite his sympathy for him.[7]

Another very common category of Euripidean amoibaia are the astrophic epirrhematic ones. As Popp (1971, 260-61) remarks, these two forms are very often combined in Euripides: the majority of the astrophic amoibaia are epirrhematic and the majority of the epirrhematic astrophic. In the kommoi where lamentation is the reaction to a report, the character bringing the news naturally delivers epirrhemas. Thus in *Hipp.* 565ff although Phaedra, as the suffering figure, would more appropriately sing, her mode of delivery can be explained by her role as informer of the chorus. According to Barrett

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[5]See Popp (1971, 251). He includes among them *O.T.* 1329-1346=1349-1366, although the single line the chorus deliver within the stanzas is an iambic dimeter.

[6]See Popp (1971, 260), who, however, omits *Rhes.* 895-914. The other monodic amoibaia are *Alc.* 393-415 (Eumelus - Admetus), *Supp.* 990-1033 (Evadne - coryphaeus), *Or.* 1369-1502 (the Phrygian - coryphaeus).

[7]Cf. the Sophoclean kommoi discussed above, although there the coryphaeus shows a more negative attitude towards the hero.

(1964, 267): "Ph.'s emotions are exhausted...; there is no wild outburst, but only the quietude of resolved despair." Similar are the cases in *Supp.* 1072-79 and *I.T.* 644-656 where the sufferers, accepting their fate with resignation, deliver iambic trimeters while the chorus, more agitated, lyrics.

The anapaestic epirrhema is conspicuously rare in Euripides, presumably because anapaests, due to their strong association with lyric verses, cannot be readily differentiated from his astropha.[8] In his strophic kommoi it is used, apart from *Alc.* 861ff discussed above, in the parodos of *Med.*, which is developed as an epirrhematic dialogue between the chorus (lyric verses) and the nurse (anapaests) reacting to Medea's utterances (lyric anapaests) heard from inside the palace.

Kommoi with structural function

Kommoi do not have any overt structural function like the other choral parts of tragedy, the parodos and the stasima, which is why their presence is not necessary in a play (they are ἴδια, not κοινά, according to Aristotle). While most of them fall within epeisodia, some, however, are found in place of a parodos or stasimon.

The kommoi which coincide with a parodos deserve particular attention since there is a quite large number of them:[9] *P.V.* 128-192, S. *El.* 121-250, *Med.* 131-213, E. *El.* 167-212, *Tro.* 153-196, *I.T.* 123-235, *Hel.* 164-252, *Or.* 140-207. The parodos of *P.V.* is the only Aeschylean example of a parodos of this type, a peculiarity which raises serious questions about its authenticity and date. So Schmidt (1971, 12, n. 47) argues that *P.V.* should be dated after *Med.*, which is the first instance of an amoibaic parodos in tragedy. Amoibaic parodoi are found in three plays of Sophocles (*El.*, *Phil.*, *O.C.*), but the parodos of *El.* is the only one with threnetic character, and also unique in the extant Sophoclean plays in that it is preceded by a monody from the principal actor, a combination frequent in Euripides (*Hec.*, *El.*, *Tro.*, *Ion*, *Hel.*), which raises

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[8]See Popp (1971, 230).

[9]For a list of all the amoibaic parodoi in tragedy and the different forms they can take see Schmidt (1971, 14-15).

questions about the much-debated problem of the priority of the two *El.* plays.[10]

All the kommatic parodoi, apart from *Tro.* and *Or.*, present certain similarities in content and/or form. They are designed to give early in the play a lyric expression of the suffering of the principal character, who is in all cases female, with the exception of Prometheus. The role of the chorus is predominantly to intensify and magnify it, either by focusing exclusively on it (*P.V.*, *I.T.*, *Hel.*) or by trying to avert the heroine from her lamentation and direct her thoughts elsewhere (S. *El.*, E. *El.*, *Med.*). The parodos of *Tro.* is an exception to the above, since there the chorus share the same suffering with Hecuba and so draw attention to themselves. The parodos of *Or.* is differentiated from the above parodoi in that it is a sleep-scene[11] where Electra instructs the chorus not to sing and dance for fear that they may wake up Orestes,[12] while mourning for her and his misery. The multiply divided stanzas of the last two parodoi, in contrast to the previous ones, suit the agitation of the scene in *Tro.* and the comings and goings of the chorus in *Or.* In *Tro.* and *I.T.* the chorus appear summoned by a character, whereas in the other cases the parodos is self-motivated out of interest for the suffering figure. Interesting is the case of *Tro.* where the chorus enter divided, the first group in line 153, the second in 176, having been summoned by the first one (165ff). This divided entry, surely a striking peculiarity, serves to emphasize the intense atmosphere, especially by the expression of the same feelings by the two semi-choruses, the one after the other.

Three of the above parodoi are preceded by a monody from the heroine (S. *El.* 86-120, E. *El.* 112-166, *Tro.* 98-152)[13] while that of *P.V.* by an

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[10]I will not get involved in this discussion but I think that Kamerbeek (1974, 7) is right in arguing that it is more likely that Sophocles imitated Euripides than *vice versa*, especially since the exact structure of this Sophoclean parodos occurs only in the *El.* of Euripides.

[11]There are three more such scenes in extant Greek tragedy, *Trach.* 974-982, *Phil.* 821-866 and *Herc.* 1042-1088, the latter sharing a number of similarities in both content and language with the parodos of *Or.* For these scenes see Dieterich (1891).

[12]In effect, she prevents the chorus from their traditional activities. As Willink (1986, on 136-9) remarks, "the 'tiptoeing parodos' of *Or.* is a very unusual, perhaps unique piece of dramaturgy", where, as Kitto (1961, 346) says, the chorus is treated "as a nuisance...a new experience for this ancient institution." On Euripides' practice of highlighting the conventionalities of tragedy see Winnington-Ingram (1969).

[13]We can say the same for the parodos of *Hel.*, although the stanza the heroine delivers before the arrival of the chorus serves as the first strophe of the subsequent amoibaion.

elaborate combination of monologue-monody (88-127) from Prometheus. In these solos the main character has the chance to present his suffering before the parodos begins, but the following exchange clarifies it and gives emphatic expression to his *ethos*. In *P.V.*, S. *El.* and *Tro.* the monody preceding the parodos coincides with the first dramatic appearance of the hero (although Prometheus and Hecuba are present throughout the prologue, they are silent figures). By contrast, in E. *El.*, *I.T.* and *Hel.* the heroine is already familiar to the audience from the prologue. The parodos of *Med.* is an exception to the above in that the suffering figure sings from inside. This creates an intense expectation of her appearance, which finally happens in line 214 after a long delay during which she has been the object of attention.

In one case, *Alc.* 861-934, the kommos coincides with the ἐπιπάροδος of the chorus, who had left earlier together with Admetus to attend Alcestis' funeral procession (cf. 739-40). Some kommoi are also used in place of a stasimon, i.e. S. *El.* 823-870,[14] *Phil.* 1081-1217, *Hel.* 330-385. In the case of *El.* and *Phil.* this is in keeping with the spirit of lyric dialogues between a character and the chorus or two characters instead of choral odes (in fact, in *Phil.* there is only one proper stasimon, 676-729). The use of a kommos instead of a stasimon is appropriate in depicting the suffering of the hero more vividly, through lyric self-expression than by choral reflection (in the case of *Phil.* it is noticeable that this is the only time the hero sings in the play).

Preludes to kommoi

Some of the strophic kommoi are preceded by an anapaestic prelude from the coryphaeus, which is suitable to accompany the slow movement of a funeral procession (*Andr.* 1166-1172, E. *Supp.* 794-797, 1114-1122) or that of a character who appears in order to lament (*O.T.* 1297-1306, *Ant.* 801-805,[15] 1257-1260).[16]

In *Ant.* 1257ff and *Andr.* 1166ff the anapaestic utterance starts with a conventional phrase (καὶ μὴν ὅδ' ἄναξ) and concludes with a statement

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[14]This passage can be also considered as a part of a long epeisodion (516-1057), although the view that it is a substitute for a stasimon is preferred: see Kamerbeek (1974, on 823-70).

[15]Antigone is actually on her way towards her tomb. For the associations of her movement with a funeral procession see pp. 216-17.

[16]For Creon's participation in Haemon's funeral procession see p. 228.

preparing for the attitude of the chorus towards the principal mourner in the kommos that follows: in *Ant.* criticism for Creon, in *Andr.* sympathy for Peleus. Both utterances in *Supp.* start with a similar conventional phrase (794-95 ἀλλὰ τάδ' ἤδη σώματα λεύσσω τῶν οἰχομένων παίδων, 1114-15 τάδε δὴ παίδων ἤδη φθιμένων ὀστᾶ φέρεται), but since the chorus of mothers are the bereaved, they naturally include a personal statement of their misfortune (795ff, 1115ff). In *Ant.* 801ff the coryphaeus shows a strong emotional involvement with Antigone's suffering, although the attitude of the chorus towards her in the subsequent kommos is not so straightforward.

The most impressive use of choral anapaests to accompany the movement of a character on stage occurs in *O.T.* 1297-1306. Here an unusually long anapaestic section of ten lines is employed to accompany Oedipus' extraordinarily slow, faltering movement after his self-blinding, so that the attention of the spectators is drawn exclusively to him. As Brown (1977, 56-57) notices, this is the only occurrence of anapaests accompanying an entrance in the play, although there is a considerable number of entrances and exits in it, which shows its great importance. At the same time these anapaests, far from consisting of conventional phrases, express the strong reaction of the chorus to the sight of the blinded Oedipus: shock and horror in the maximum degree (cf. 1297 ὦ δεινόν, 1298 ὦ δεινότατον,[17] 1306 τοίαν φρίκην), so that they cannot even look at him, even though they want to ask a lot (1303-5). The Theban elders no doubt pity Oedipus and grieve for him (cf. 1299 ὦ τλῆμον, 1303 φεῦ φεῦ δύστην'), but their prevailing emotion is horror.[18]

I chose to deal in more detail with the choral anapaests reacting to Oedipus' entrance in order to show that Sophocles uses this prelude to the kommos as a means of focusing on the individual. This is also the case in *Ant.* 801ff and, less evidently, 1257ff, although in both cases the anapaestic sections are brief and rather conventional and thus in no sense so powerful. The length of the anapaestic utterance in *O.T.* allows for the attitude of the chorus to be fully developed before the kommos proper begins while in the other two cases the coryphaeus gives only clues which are developed in the subsequent exchange. So the anapaests in *O.T.* are more closely associated with the kommos (thus in his first utterance, 1307-11, Oedipus picks up the

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[17]This adjective is constantly repeated in the kommos (cf. also 1312, 1327).

[18]The reaction of the Theban elders is summarized in the last phrase of the messenger preceding the anapaests (1296 στυγοῦντ' ἐποικτίσαι). As Segal (1996, 167) argues, the reaction of the chorus in this passage points to the *par excellence* tragic emotions of pity and fear the spectators are widely assumed to experience.

metre of the chorus, continuing with lyric anapaests), while the combination of features of the recitative and lyric type in them (see p. 57) is indicative of their greater emotional force.[19]

While in Sophocles, as shown above, the introductory choral anapaests focus mainly on the individual, in Euripides (*Andr.* 1166-1172, *Supp.* 794-797, 1114-1122) they are used mainly to accompany a funeral procession and secondly to describe the misery of the bereaved. Anapaests, used to accompany a stage procession, are especially suitable when this happens to be funereal due to their connection with mourning. So they are found in several such occasions apart from the ones mentioned above, e.g. *Ant.* 929-43 (Antigone's procession towards her tomb), *Alc.* 741-46 (ἐκφορά of Alcestis), *Tro.* 782-98 (Astyanax moving towards his death), 1251-55 (ἐκφορά of Astyanax). In *Pers.* 908ff and *Aj.* 201ff, the introductory anapaests are delivered by the actor and are subsequently taken up by the chorus.[20]

Preludes to kommoi can be in iambic trimeters as well: so in *O.C.* 1668-69 the messenger announces the γόοι of Antigone and Ismene for Oedipus; in E. *El.* 1172-76 the coryphaeus announces in conventional terms the entrance of Orestes and Electra after the double killing; in *Rhes.* 890-94 the Muse introduces herself, like all the *dei ex machina*, before she starts her lament for Rhesus. In other kommoi, as in *Aj.* 348ff and S. *El.* 121ff, the hero is introduced gradually, and thus more naturally, through a longer scene (*Aj.* 333-47, *El.* 77-85) rather than a conventional announcement. The kommos of *Sept.* is preceded by an elaborate prelude in lyric iambics (848-60) announcing the arrival of the bodies of Eteocles and Polyneices and the γόος of the chorus for them.[21]

Monologues following or preceding kommoi

In several cases the lyric expression of the suffering of a character is followed by a monologue where he recapitulates the main points of the

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[19]For the disputed nature of these anapaests see Campbell (1879, on 1297-1311), Jebb (1893, on 1303), Dawe (1982, on 1297-1311).

[20]For the case of *Pers.* see the extensive discussion in pp. 148ff.

[21]See pp. 165ff.

preceding lyric.[22] Especially in the monologues following the Sophoclean kommoi the hero tries to justify his behaviour with logical arguments, as in *Aj*. 430-480, *El*. 254-309, *O.T*. 1369-1415, *Ant*. 891-928; similarly Medea in *Med*. 214-266. The appeal to Agamemnon in the great kommos of *Cho*. is continued by Orestes and Electra after its end in iambic trimeters (479-509). Three monologues of increasingly greater length (1178-1197, 1214-1241, 1256-1294), more and more agitated, follow Cassandra's lyric exchange with the chorus in *Ag*. 1072ff. Similar monologues following kommoi are to be found in *Alc*. 935-961, E. *Supp*. 1080-1113, *Hel*. 255-305 and *Rhes*. 915-949, the latter being the only case where the actor continues in iambics immediately after his lyrics without interruption from the chorus.

On the other hand, some kommoi recapitulate themes of a preceding monologue. So in the prologues of *I.T*. and *Hel*. the heroines give an exposition of their past misfortunes, for which they mourn in the parodoi; Philoctetes' singing in *Phil*. 1081ff is mostly a lyric expression of his monologue earlier in the play (927-962).

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[22]The juxtaposition of lyric and iambic utterances concerning the same theme is a usual technique in tragedy. See Schadewaldt (1926, 143-44), Kranz (1933, 166-67).

2. METRE

With regard to the musical accompaniment of the laments, the depictions on vases make it clear that it was the *aulos*, and later literary evidence consistently attests its use, as, for example, Lucian *De Luctu* 19 ἡ πρὸς τὸν αὐλὸν αὕτη στερνοτυπία, Athen. IV. 174ff τούτοις (i.e. αὐλοῖς) δὲ καὶ οἱ Κᾶρες χρῶνται ἐν τοῖς θρήνοις.[1] Similarly, in tragedy, references to a song unaccompanied by the lyre, the instrument associated with joyful occasions (thus implying that it was accompanied by the *aulos*), is almost a commonplace, e.g. *Eum.* 331-33 ὕμνος ἐξ' Ερινύων...ἀφόρμικτος, *Ag.* 990-91 τὸν δ' ἄνευ λύρας ὅμως ὑμνῳδεῖ θρῆνον 'Ερινύος, *I.T.* 145-46 τᾶς οὐκ εὐμούσου μολπᾶς ἀλύροις ἐλέγοις.[2] Concerning the musical tonality of the laments, it seems that there was a certain association with eastern modes: according to Plato (*Republ.* III. 398e) they were sung in the mixed Lydian (μιξολυδιστί), the higher Lydian (συντονολυδιστί) and similar ones.[3] Since these modes are lost to us and there is no way to reconstruct the music of any lamenting pieces, the metres frequently used are the only evidence we have about their musical/rhythmical pattern.

The relationship between metre and music is debatable but if, as is most probable, music underlined the metrical pattern of the words,[4] a study of the metres used in laments is important for the reconstruction of the *ethos* of lamentation. Therefore in this chapter I will try to give a systematic analysis of the metres frequently used in kommoi, considering their association with a specific structure and occasion, the order in which they are combined and when one changes to another. For metres appearing in a large number of kommoi with similar characteristics, we can safely say that they

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[1]For more references and a detailed discussion of the association of *aulos* with threnoi see Reiner (1938, 67-70). Diggle (1974, 11-12) also collects passages referring to the mournful sound of the *aulos*.

[2]For the use of ἄλυρος in tragedy see p. 84.

[3]Plato calls them θρηνώδεις ἁρμονίαι, according to the belief that musical modes had the power to influence men's emotions (cf. also Arist. *Polit.* VIII. 1340a-b), and this is why he excludes them from his ideal state (*Republ.* III. 398e). For a discussion of different musical modes and their use in drama see Pickard-Cambridge (1968, 257ff) and especially West (1992, 177ff).

[4]Dale (1968, 1-14) discusses this complex problem.

were conventional in this type of lament and probably had their origins in ritual. Tragedy, with the variety of metres it could employ, could allow the ritual threnos to retain its original rhythmical pattern without having to change it into another form, as epic poetry turned it into dactylic hexameters.

Iambic metre

Scholars have long recognized the regular use of iambics in tragedy for the expression of grief and have also attempted to associate them with actual ceremonial practice. So Wilamowitz (1921, 208) suggested that their widespread use in tragic laments reflects their use in the funeral dirges of the Athenians. Similarly, Kannicht (1969, II. 106, n. 2) remarks that iambic is the prevalent metre of the ritual lament, the kommos, while Broadhead (1960, 317) argues that anapaestic and iambic metres are widely used in threnoi since "a rising rhythm was suitable for the loud and shrill utterances of a threnos." Iambic, with or without admixture of other metres, is indeed the metre most commonly used in kommoi. Lyric iambics are often syncopated (frequently catalectic as well) and resolved. Syncopation is very frequent in Aeschylean iambics whereas resolution is sparingly used. By contrast, Euripidean iambics are usually unsyncopated but frequently resolved.[5]

Three Euripidean kommoi are iambic throughout: *Supp*. 798-837 (combined with a couple of other cola: see p. 231), 1123-1164, *Tro*. 1287-1332. All three pieces are pure lyric, with multiply divided stanzas and elements of antiphony, and have a prominent ritual character: *Supp*. 798ff is a lament at the *prothesis*, including gestures of self-infliction (826ff), *Supp*. 1123ff is delivered over the ashes of the dead, *Tro*. 1287ff is a lament for the destruction of Troy with ritual invocation of the dead (1303ff). Predominantly iambic is also the second part of three kommoi which fall into two parts: *Pers*. 1002-1077 (combined with several other metres: see p. 155), *Sept*. 961-1004 (with two probable dochmiacs: see p. 174, n. 45), *Andr*. 1197-1225. All three kommoi have a ritual character (*Pers*. 908ff is a lament for the loss of the Persian empire and the numerous deaths it involved, *Sept*. 875ff and *Andr*. 1173ff are delivered at the *prothesis* of the dead), which is intensified in their second part

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[5]See Dale (1968, 81ff). In contrast to their extensive use in Aeschylus and Euripides, lyric iambics are less frequent in Sophocles, where, as Denniston (1936, 121) remarks, they rarely constitute the prevailing rhythm of a stanza, being usually intermingled with other metres.

with the employment of multiply divided stanzas, close antiphony and demonstrative gestures (cf. *Pers*. 1046ff, *Andr*. 1209ff), and coincides with the change of metre into iambic. In *Pers*. and *Sept*. the second part of the kommos is characterized by metrical simplicity in comparison with the first part. In the case of *Pers*. the iambic metre is prepared in the preceding section (see p. 149) while in *Sept*. this is the metrical pattern from the beginning, but in the first part with the admixture of a variety of other metres (see p. 169). The break between the two parts of the kommos in both structure and metre is particularly striking in *Andr*. 1173ff where the wholly dactylic part of Peleus' lyrics gives way to the wholly iambic exchange between him and the chorus.

In all these cases there is complete unanimity between the participants of the kommos. In *Pers*. this is achieved in the iambic part (1002ff); similarly, in *Andr*. the chorus participate in Peleus' lament only in this part. Three of the above kommoi conclude the play (*Pers*. 908-1077, *Sept*. 875-1004, *Tro*. 1287-1332) while the others come close to its end. Thus they naturally react to a catastrophe already accomplished, which has become known to the participants well before this point in the play, so that they can compose themselves to express their grief ritually. The conclusion of the above discussion is that pure or predominantly iambic metre characterizes kommoi with prevailing ritual character, which are more or less static in the sense that they are not interrupted by further action on stage, are arranged in pure lyric strophic structure with antiphonal exchanges between the participants, who are united in grief, and come at or close to the end of the play as a reaction to a disaster previously accomplished.

Exclusively iambic (concluding with an alcaic decasyllable, 1226=1232) is also E. *El*. 1177-1232. The metre and the presence of the bodies of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus would suit a formal lament at the *prothesis* (according to the above examples), but the occasion by which it is prompted indicates that it is rather a distortion of such a lament: Orestes and Electra, being themselves the murderers, express not grief but rather repentance and horror at their deed while the attitude of the chorus towards them (they can neither intensify their lament nor offer them consolation) intensifies their feeling of guilt. To the kommoi whose second part is iambic we can add *Cho*. 423-65 (the second and third sections of the kommos). As in the cases of *Pers*. and *Sept*., the change to pure iambic metre (which, likewise, has been prepared in the preceding section of the kommos) coincides with greater metrical simplicity and change in structure as well (see pp. 185-86). The iambic metre suits the narrative section of the kommos whose ritual

background is obvious: it takes place before the tomb of Agamemnon, including repeated invocations of him. In contrast to the above mentioned kommoi this one occurs in the first half of *Cho.*, as one of its functions is to react to the catastrophe accomplished in the previous play of the trilogy.

It is noticeable that ritual antiphony for the dead, in single or antilabic verses, is always in iambics or, exceptionally, in iambo-dochmiacs. So, apart from the cases mentioned above, iambic is the antiphonal lament in *Herc.* 1064-67 (chorus - Amphitryon) and *Pho.* 1560-61 (Oedipus - Antigone), and iambo-dochmiac in *Tro.* 1229-31 (chorus - Hecuba), with the bodies of the deceased being present in all three cases.

Dochmiac/iambo-dochmiac metre

After iambic the second metre most frequently used in kommoi is dochmiac. It is a characteristically tragic metre[6] appearing, as West (1982, 108) remarks, in every extant tragedy. By contrast, its use in comedy is rare, and when it appears it is used, as Dale (1968, 113) remarks, either "in παρατραγῳδία or for deliberately and unsuitably prosaic sentiments". According to Dale (1968, 110), dochmiacs, on their own or in combination with iambics (iambo-dochmiacs), have to a much greater extent than any other metre a definite emotional connotation: they are used by all three tragedians to express any strong feeling, grief, fear, horror, even triumph or joy.[7] The great diversity of the form of this metre makes its association with other metrical patterns flexible.[8] Especially the likeness of some of its forms to syncopated iambics is, as Dale (1968, 107) argues, evidently the reason why there are so many passages in tragedy where iambics and dochmiacs are mixed.

This association is made clear as early as *Ag.* 1072-1177, used appropriately to express Cassandra's excitement as well as the ominous premonitions of the chorus (1114ff). However, strangely enough, in this most

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[6]According to Snell (1962, 52) and Dale (1968, 104), it is probable that Aeschylus was the first to use the dochmiac.

[7]For their association especially with laments cf. the scholiast on *Sept.* 103 that it is a ῥυθμὸς... ἐπιτήδειος πρὸς θρήνους καὶ στεναγμούς.

[8]For a discussion of the different forms of dochmiacs occurring in Greek drama see Conomis (1964).

excited passage dochmiacs are mixed with acatalectic trimeters indistinguishable in rhythm from those of dialogue (e.g. 1082=1087, 1138-39=1148-49). This is also frequently the case in other Sophoclean and Euripidean kommoi of the same metrical pattern, e.g. *Aj.* 367=382, *O.T.* 1317-18=1325-26, *Ant.* 1271=1295, 1273=1297, *Hipp.* 819-20=838-39, *Supp.* 1124-25=1131-32. Dale (1968, 86) argues that it is most natural to suppose a form of chanted delivery for these trimeters, which would make the transition from iambics to lyrics and *vice versa* without absurdity, adding, however, "that this must not be taken to admit a blurring of the distinction between spoken and sung metres."[9]

Predominantly dochmiac metre in a kommos usually expresses more violent emotions than the combination of dochmiacs with iambics. So, for example, Creon's lament in *Ant.* 1261-1347 (exclusively dochmiac apart from two iambic trimeters in the first pair) indicates greater agitation, marked in the use of interjections, repetitions and asyndetic structure, than *Aj.* 348-429 or *O.T.* 1313-1368 (both passages iambo-dochmiac, with the combination of some choriambic cola in the first), where the heroes are more composed and their utterances more reflective. Similarly, the second pair of the kommos of *Eum.* 778-891 (exclusively dochmiac) indicates greater agitation, reflected in the use of repeated interjections and exclamatory phrases, than the first pair (iambo-dochmiac), where the Erinyes retain a certain degree of composure, starting with an invocation of the younger gods.

Most of the kommoi which express an immediate reaction to news just reported are dochmiac or iambo-dochmiac, with or without admixture of other metres: so the lyric utterances of the chorus in *Hipp.* 565-600,[10] 811-16, 852-55, of Theseus in *Hipp.* 817-51, Hecuba in *Hec.* 681-722, the chorus in *Herc.* 909-921, Creousa in *Ion* 763-799, the chorus and Creon in *Pho.* 1335-1353. Less uniform is the metrical pattern of the lyric utterances of the chorus in three

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[9]Collard (1975, II. 392) also argues that unsyncopated iambic trimeters became "assimilated to the lyric context by recital to the continuous musical accompaniment" (cf., similarly, Broadhead 1960, 314). The above views are more probable than West's opinion (1982, 112), commenting on Cassandra's trimeters, that she "momentarily settles into spoken delivery." That the delivery of such verses would fall somewhere in between spoken and sung mode is indicated by the use of forms expected to be found only in lyric verses in such iambic trimeters (e.g. χείρεσσιν in *Ant.* 1297).

[10]Barrett (1964, 267) prefers to give them to the coryphaeus arguing that they "seem ill suited to the formality of delivery in unison." Similarly, he suggests (1964, 318) that perhaps a single member of the chorus delivered lines 811-16.

messenger-scenes, the oldest of this type: *Pers*. 256-289, *Aj*. 201-262, *Aj*. 879-973. All the above passages are epirrhematic compositions constituting the first reaction to disastrous news just disclosed. When death is reported the bodies of the deceased are revealed (cf. *Aj*. 898ff, *Ant*. 1293ff), so that the scenes acquire a ritual background, but they do not have the static character of the *prothesis*-scenes of the iambic laments, since the news of the catastrophe is recent and in some cases there is still action going on (e.g. in *Aj*. 891ff the moving about of the chorus as they learn about Ajax's death, in *Ant*. 1293ff the bringing forward of the *ekkyklema* with Eurydice's corpse).

The dochmiac metre then, with or without admixture of other metres, is often accompanied by lively movement. This is also the case in *Hec*. 1056-1108, where the blinded Polymestor moves about stumbling,[11] as well as in *Herc*. 1042-88 and *Or*. 140-207, where the chorus attempt to approach the sleeping figures while being instructed to go away. Similarly, in the death-scenes the agitation and the moving about of the chorus as they hear the cries off-stage are marked mostly by dochmiac metre, as in *Cho*. 869-874, *Med*. 1270a-1281, E. *El*. 1165-1171, *Herc*. 749-762, 886-909 (in the latter passage with a greater metrical elaboration than in the previous ones), *Or*. 1296-1310. In *Alc*. 872-877=889-894 iambo-dochmiac metre is used not, as usually, as a sign of agitation but in an attempted consolation.[12]

In conclusion, in comparison to the iambic kommoi the dochmiac or iambo-dochmiac ones are concerned less frequently with death and, when they are, they do not have the static ritual character of the iambic laments. Also unlike them, they are usually epirrhematic compositions and the attitude of the chorus towards the mourner varies from disapproval of his actions/behaviour (e.g. *Aj*. 348ff, *O.T*. 1307ff, *Ant*. 1261ff) to attempts at consolation (e.g. *Alc*. 861ff, *Hipp*. 817ff), sympathy for him (e.g. *Hipp*. 565ff, *Ion* 763ff) or unanimity in lamentation (e.g. *Aj*. 891ff, *Tro*. 1209ff). Peretti (1939, 39-49) argues that iambo-dochmiac was the metre of an original ritual threnos, which is reflected in its widespread use in tragic laments. However, as is clear from the above discussion, at least according to tragic convention iambics and dochmiacs or, more frequently, iambo-dochmiacs were used on different occasions. Judging from the fact that iambics are usually used for ritual laments for the dead (especially at *prothesis*-scenes), it is more likely that

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[11]For the monody of the blinded Polymestor see Collard (1991).

[12]Dale (1954, on 861-934) suggests that since these metres pass easily into recitative, "it is possible that these lines were delivered in something less than the full singing tone, and even that they were given by the Coryphaeus alone." Cf., similarly, Conacher (1988, 189).

iambic was the metre of the ritual threnos and that their combination with dochmiacs, the tragic metre *par excellence*, was a tragic convention.

Anapaestic metre

Brown (1977) has persuasively shown that the widespread use of anapaests in ritual contexts in tragedy, especially mourning, points to an original use of the metre in actual lamentation ritual. The type of anapaests suited especially for mourning are the lyric 'Klage-anapäste', to use the German term, which usually follow immediately after the recitative ones (e.g. *Pers*. 908ff, *Tro*. 98ff). The sung anapaests are distinguished from the recitative by one or a combination of the following features:[13] Doric dialect, a greater freedom of contraction and resolution, frequent occurrence of dimeters without diaeresis between the metra, admission of catalectic dimeters (paroemiacs) anywhere (so that they do not necessarily mark period-end) and of two or more of them in succession, admission of acatalectic dimeters as clausulae and admixture of other metres. Characteristic of the 'Klage-anapäste' are the spondaic sequences, so that often an anapaestic verse consists wholly of long syllables, which indicates a heavy, slow movement of the dirge (e.g. *Pers*. 922, 925, 928, S. *El*. 88-89, 105). By contrast, a series of resolutions suggests great agitation (e.g. *Pers*. 933, 936-37).[14] The peculiar nature of anapaests, as they participate both in the spoken and the sung mode of delivery, often allows the combination of features of both types in one system (cf. *Pers*. 922ff, S. *El*. 86ff, *O.T*. 1297ff).

Anapaests are used in the first part of the kommos of *Pers*., predominantly in its first pair. It may not be accidental that this metrically uniform pair involves agreement between Xerxes and the chorus (unanimity in lamentation) while the other two, where the chorus continue each time with a different metre from the one in which Xerxes started, convey their reproaches against him. Lyric anapaests in lamentation for the dead are also used in the choral ephymnia in *Ag*. 1448ff: all three start with anapaestic verses (with an increasing number of them from the first to the third) and are

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[13]See Dale (1968, 51), West (1982, 121).

[14]However, these verses can also be scanned as dochmiacs (see p. 152, n. 27).

followed by various lyric metres.[15] The parodos of S. *El.* consists of a variety of metres, but when the chorus come to lamenting Agamemnon (193ff), they turn to anapaests with frequent contraction of the short elements (193-94 are wholly spondaic), and Electra picks up the same metre while continuing her lament (201-206). It is noticeable that this is the only place in the parodos where they unite their voices. Euripides uses lyric anapaests to a much greater extent than the other two tragedians, which are especially prominent in four plays (*Hec.*, *Tro.*, *I.T.*, *Ion*) mostly in astrophic sequences.[16] In the anapaestic parodoi of *Tro.* and *I.T.* the chorus and the heroine join their voices in lamentation (in *Tro.* they actually continue the metre of Hecuba's previous monody). In *Aj.* 233-44 lyric anapaests are found in the context of a messenger report. Having learnt from the chorus that the animals Ajax slaughtered came from the Greek camp, Tecmessa can no longer retain the calmness of her previous anapaests (201ff) and expresses her agitation at the beginning of this section (233 ὤμοι· κεῖθεν κεῖθεν), continuing her report with the description of Ajax's torturing of the animals, before she resumes her calm state of mind in 257-62.[17]

To summarize, wholly anapaestic sections are not so frequent in kommoi as iambics or dochmiacs/iambo-dochmiacs. They appear either in pure lyric or epirrhematic compositions, mainly in single division of the stanzas or long astrophic sequences (with the exception of the parodos of *Tro.*), and suggest agreement between the participants when they are united through the lyric mode. They concern mainly death (*Pers.* 931ff, ephymnia in *Ag.* 1448ff, S. *El.* 193ff, *I.T.* 123ff), although the ritual background is not always so prominent as in the iambic kommoi, but also other misfortunes (parodos of *Tro.*).

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[15]Fraenkel (1950, III. 662) remarks that the metrical pattern of these ephymnia has no parallel in the extant plays of Aeschylus or Sophocles but there are some analogies in Euripides, among which the parodos of *Med.*

[16]See Dale (1968, 57), West (1982, 122, n. 108). Brown (1977, 46, n. 2) notices that in *Tro.* over 14% of the text is anapaestic, a high percentage found elsewhere only in *Pers.*

[17]However, different views have been suggested on the nature of Tecmessa's anapaests in *Aj.* 201-7, 233-44, 257-62. See Gardiner (1987, 58), Stanford (1963, on 201, 208-9 and pp. 251-52), Jebb (1896, on his critical note on 208).

3. OCCASION

A recent death (*prothesis*-scenes)

Since contemporary funeral practice required formalized expressions of grief at the laying out of the body and since *prothesis*-scenes could be easily represented on stage, it is no surprise that a considerable number of them are staged by the tragedians. In some cases the appearance of the bodies of the dead meet the requirements of the performance of a formal lament, that is, both participants of the kommos share the same grief and the action has come to a stop, so a 'static' lament can take place: *Sept*. 875-1004, *Andr*. 1173-1225, E. *Supp*. 798-837, 1123-1164 (in the latter case the ritual props are the funerary urns). To the above kommoi we should add *Pers*. 908-1077 and *Tro*. 1287-1332, where the deaths lamented are many, so they cannot be represented as *prothesis*-scenes. These are typical examples of laments for cities, which were customary in antiquity.[1]

The above kommoi coincide with those which are wholly or in their second part predominantly iambic (see pp. 52-53). I summarize here some of their characteristic features: close antiphony (for which see pp. 107ff), with the utterances of a participant often interrupted by the other (e.g. *Pers*. 1020-22, *Sept*. 963-65, 989-91, *Tro*. 1310-11, *Supp*. 805-7), employment of interjections, with an impressive accumulation in *Pers*. 1002ff and to a smaller extent in the other kommoi, and of physical manifestations of grief, performed in a grand scale in *Pers*. 1046ff and in a considerably smaller one in the other three pieces. In the cases of *Pers*., *Supp*. 798ff and *Tro*. the actor is the leader of the kommos,[2] exhorting the chorus to cry out in distress or perform gestures of grief, while in *Andr*. 1197ff the chorus undertake this role (cf., similarly, *Herc*. 1064-66 and *Tro*. 1229-31). In the Sophoclean tragedies there is no kommos of this kind, which is in accordance with the general lack of ritual elements in them.

The more or less uniform pattern of the Aeschylean and Euripidean kommoi discussed above indicates that they most probably reflect a traditional threnos for the dead. Broadhead (1960, on 1002ff) argues that the

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[1] See Alexiou (1974, 83-85).

[2] In the cases of Xerxes and Hecuba in *Pers*. and *Tro*. respectively the ritual status of the *exarchoi* matches their social position as king/queen.

form taken by the kommos of *Pers*. in its second part, one participant giving expression to his grief as *exarchos* and the other picking up his thought or even his very words, was a basic feature of the ritual threnos.[3] Similarly, Peretti (1939, 34-35) finds the dominant role of Xerxes in this part of the kommos unusual, in view of the fact that in early tragedy the chorus rather than the actor was the protagonist, and argues that it reflects the role of the *exarchos* in a primitive threnos. On the other hand, Koonce (1962, 39ff) associates the role of Xerxes with that of the Homeric ἀοιδοί who act as ἔξαρχοι θρήνων (*Il*. 24. 720-21), arguing that this role was undertaken by somebody unrelated to the dead. However, Koonce does not take into account that in the Homeric representation of the *prothesis* of Hector, apart from the ἀοιδοί the kinswomen of the dead act as *exarchoi* as well (see p. 20), probably with a different role each. In any case, characteristic of the tragic passages where the role of the *exarchos* is most revealing is that they include highly stylized forms of expression, thus they could be applicable to any case of bereavement or other misfortune, which arguably shows that they reflect ritual practice.

Sept. 875ff and *Supp*. 1123ff are the only cases of a tragic lament performed by two semi-choruses and two choruses respectively,[4] for which, however, there are parallels in *Od*. 24. 58ff, Plato *Laws* XII. 947b and [Moschus] *Epitaph. Bion*. 46ff.[5] In *Sept*. 875ff the chorus have no kindred relationship with the dead, which is certainly a peculiarity in tragedy (see pp. 70-71),[6] but has its precedent in the cases of *Od*. and Plato *Laws* mentioned above. In the first passage Thetis, although present, does not participate in the lament of the Nereids and the Muses for Achilles, while in the second the dead priests in Plato's ideal state will receive at their *prothesis* a hymn instead of a threnos performed by two choirs, one consisting of girls and another of boys singing alternately. The non-relation of the two choirs to the dead is suitable to the character of a public ceremony. Similarly, in *Sept*. the choice of an unrelated chorus ensures a more restrained and impartial tone in their comments about the brothers. Contrary to *Sept*. 875ff, in *Supp*. 1123ff both

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[3]Hölzle (1934, 22-24) also shows that the parallelism in thought and the repetition of phrases are characteristic features of funeral lamentation.

[4]Koonce (1962, 36) remarks that this form of a strophic passage is unique in tragedy, which reinforces the assumption that it has its origin in ritual practice.

[5]For these passages see Nilsson (1911, 621, 623).

[6]This is one of the reasons why the sisters are introduced in this scene (see pp. 168-69).

choruses are close kin of the dead, which is also unusual.[7] However, this peculiarity most probably intends to emphasize the personal loss of the bereaved, which is in contrast to the preceding official and impersonal funeral oration delivered by Adrastus.

Koonce (1962, 33-34) notices that Euripides uses the form of the monodic amoibaia only for laments, thus suggesting that it was used originally and exclusively for lamentation, and parallels the minor participation of the chorus with the collective groaning at the end of each solo lament in *Iliad* 24. Whether or not we accept Koonce's speculation, the latter cannot be right since in Homer the women mourn together with the female relatives (cf. the use of the verbs στένω, στενάχω) whereas in the above tragic laments the coryphaeus is emotionally distanced from the mourner, which in the case of *Rhes.* is reinforced by the physical distance between them (the Muse appears on the θεολογεῖον with Rhesus' body in her hands: cf. 885ff).[8] This role of the coryphaeus is contrasted to that of the whole chorus in the pure lyric kommoi discussed above, so I do not find it plausible that it has its origin in ritual practice where a more vital participation of the wider group of mourners would be normally expected.

In other cases of kommoi representing a *prothesis*-scene, the conditions for a ritual antiphonal lament are lacking, as in *Ag.* 1448-1576 and *Cho.* 973-1043, where one of the participants is the murderer, or in *Ant.* 1261-1347, where the chorus retain a negative attitude towards Creon and so would not normally join in his lament. Apart from the above cases where the relationship between the participants and/or between them and the dead does not allow a formal lament, this is also precluded when the situation is urgent, since there cannot be a pause in the action for it to take place. So, for example, in *Aj.* 891-973 the prevailing question is the burial of Ajax and in *Hec.* 681-722 the planning of revenge for Polydorus' murder, while in *Tro.* 1209-1255 Astyanax's preparation for burial has to be accomplished quickly. The staging of the *prothesis*-scenes mentioned so far and the different ways they are treated show that the tragedians make full use of this funeral practice according to the dramatic requirements of each play. It is noticeable that not

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[7]Koonce (1962, 36, n. 10) remarks that there is no other evidence for responsive choral singing by the kin at Greek funerals.

[8]A shared lament over Rhesus' body will be performed later by the Muse and her sisters (cf. *Rhes.* 976), a scene which obviously draws on the mourning of the dead Achilles by the Nereids with Thetis being present, as described in *Od.* 24.

all deaths in tragedy are lamented; this happens only when it is dramatically useful.[9]

The representation of a *prothesis*-scene is not always possible because of the circumstances of the death. So in *O.C.* 1670-1750 the traditional funerary rites cannot be accomplished because of the absence of Oedipus' body. Even lamentation is inappropriate in this case, as Theseus points out (1751-53), since Oedipus' death was brought about by divine will and so to lament can incur νέμεσις (1753).

The types of death lamented in kommoi vary: death in the battlefield (e.g. Eteocles and Polyneices in *Sept.*, the Argive leaders in E. *Supp.*), murder (e.g. Agamemnon in *Ag.*, Clytemnestra in *Cho.* and E. *El.*, Neoptolemus in *Andr.*), suicide (e.g. Ajax in *Aj.*, Haemon and Eurydice in *Ant.*, Phaedra in *Hipp.*), natural death (Alcestis in *Alc.*), supernatural death (Oedipus in *O.C.*). The character whose body is brought forward to be lamented can be either a major one with an important role in the play (e.g. Eteocles in *Sept.*, Agamemnon in *Ag.*, Ajax in *Aj.*) or a minor character (e.g. Eurydice in *Ant.*, Polydorus in *Hec.*, Astyanax in *Tro.*) or somebody who does not even belong to the *dramatis personae* (Polyneices in *Sept.*, Neoptolemus in *Andr.*, the Argive leaders in E. *Supp.*). The laying out of the bodies in the last two categories serves not only to enhance the suffering of the living but also often to emphasize the importance of the personality of the dead (as, for example, of Polyneices in *Sept.*, the Argive leaders in E. *Supp.*). Even in cases where a character is important in the play, his dead body can gain additional importance. So, for example, in the second part of *Aj.* everything revolves around Ajax's body, and the dispute about his burial indicates his importance, while in E. *El.* the sight of the dead Clytemnestra makes Orestes and Electra consider their deed and contemplate their future misery. In most cases the death lamented has occurred during the course of the play, with the exception of Polydorus' in *Hec.* and the Argive leaders' in E. *Supp.*

A death which happened long ago

The three kommoi concerning Agamemnon's doom (*Cho.* 306-478, S. *El.* 121-250, E. *El.* 167-212) take place a long time after his death. Only that of

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[9]Koonce (1962, 22ff) specifies the types of death in tragedy which are not lamented or at least not with a formalized lament.

Cho. has a ritual background as it is performed at his tomb. Visits to the tomb on certain anniversary occasions and other festivals were a common practice in real life (in fact, this is one of the most widespread themes on funerary vases: see p. 14). However, according to the Solonian legislation only close relatives of the dead were allowed to visit the tomb, whereas in *Cho.* a whole chorus of unrelated women do so.[10] In S. *El.* Electra's mourning takes place at the palace doors while in E. *El.* the setting has moved to Electra's rural cottage. The united prayer of Orestes, Electra and the chorus in *Cho.*, in contrast to Electra's solitary prayer and the chorus' disapproval of her insistence on mourning in S. *El.* and the similar dispute between them in E. *El.*, are indicative of the different ways the three tragedians treat the same scene and of the different relationships between the chorus and the actor. Naturally enough, these kommoi do not express the agitation of those delivered at the *prothesis* (hence the single or non-division of the stanzas).

Death-scenes

The exchanges delivered while a murder is taking place (*Cho.* 869-874, S. *El.* 1398-1421, *Med.* 1270a-1281, E. *El.* 1165-1171, *Herc.* 749-762, 886-909, *Or.* 1296-1310) are typical 'death-scenes'; those present (in all cases the chorus and in S. *El.* and *Or.* Electra as well) are informed of an off-stage murder by the cries of the person struck (exceptionally in *Herc.* 886ff by Amphitryon's), on which they comment.[11] As is reasonable, the emotional state of the chorus on hearing the cries differs according to their sympathies towards the person murdered. So, for example, it is undoubtedly joy in *Herc.* 749ff, since the usurper Lycus is killed by the lawful ruler Heracles; in S. *El.* they are shocked at the deed (in contrast to Electra's jubilation); in *Med.* and *Herc.* 886ff they pity the children murdered as well as the murderer. All these exchanges (apart from *Herc.* 886ff) are epirrhematic compositions. More extensive are S. *El.* 1398ff, where Electra converses with the chorus responding to

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[10]As Foley (1993, 107) remarks: "Any reader of tragedy knows that the genre permits behavior that was seemingly discouraged in the practice of the society that produced these plays."

[11]For the convention of off-stage cries and the chorus' response to them see Arnott (1982). By contrast, Pathmanathan (1965) argues that when death occurs off-stage, the playwright is always directed by motives inherent in the dramatic situation.

Clytemnestra's cries as well, and *Herc.* 886ff, where Amphitryon's cries from inside let the chorus imagine the murder.

Other occasions

Although a great number of kommoi are expressions of grief for an actual death (in fact, most of them involve a *prothesis*-scene), the tragedians effectively exploit this dramatic device in order to stage laments for occasions outside everyday experience, e.g. deaths wrongly reported to have happened (S. *El.* 823-870, *I.T.* 123-235, *Hel.* 164-252, 330-385) or imminent deaths (*Ag.* 1072-1135, 1136-1177, *Ant.* 806-882, *I.T.* 644-656). The kommoi prompted by wrong information (in *I.T.* by a dream falsely interpreted) serve to show the despair into which the receiver of the news is plunged, so that it is sharply contrasted to the reversal of her fortunes when the truth is revealed (in all three plays the joy of the recognition-amoibaion balances the despair of the kommos). The emotional situation of the heroines in the kommoi of S. *El.* and *I.T.* also determines their actions from this point onwards: Electra decides to take vengeance alone for Agamemnon's murder by killing Aegisthus herself since Chrysothemis is not willing to help her, while Iphigeneia, hardened by her dream, decides not to be merciful towards the two strangers, which puts into danger Orestes' life and thus threatens ironically to fulfil her dream. Of the kommoi mentioned above only S. *El.* 823ff presents the agitation characteristic of a ritual kommos with its use of multiply divided stanzas, interrupted utterances[12] and interjections. The role of the chorus, however, is consolatory. All cases of lamentation for a death (whether recent or not, actual or false) are interwoven with lamentation for one's misery. In fact, often the occasion of a death is only the starting point for the shifting to other personal troubles (cf. S. *El.* 1121-22 ὅπως ἐμαυτὴν καὶ γένος τὸ πᾶν ὁμοῦ ξὺν τῇδε κλαύσω κἀποδύρωμαι σποδῷ and the similar references in *Iliad* on p. 16, n. 32).

Ag. 1072-1135 is an impressive scene, as Cassandra in her excited singing describes in advance Agamemnon's imminent murder. On the other hand, in *I.T.* 644ff the chorus mourn for Orestes' impending death, which does not finally happen. Advance lamentation for still living heroes is not an innovation of tragedy; it has its precedent in Homer (see p. 24). However, in

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[12]In this kommos we find the first lyric ἀντιλαβή in Sophocles' extant plays, a form which is further developed in *Phil.* and *O.C.*

tragedy this device is taken further to the point where a character sings his own funerary dirge, as Cassandra in *Ag.* 1136ff and Antigone in *Ant.* 806ff (Cassandra consciously points to that: *Ag.* 1322-23 θρῆνον ἐμὸν τὸν αὐτῆς), an inversion of the normal practice of lamentation for one's death by one's kin skilfully adapted to the requirements of each play. One may also compare A. *Supp.* 116 ζῶσα γόοις με τιμῶ (although the Danaids do not face the danger of being put to death), *Cho.* 926 θρηνεῖν ζῶσα.[13]

Suffering other than death - Sophoclean kommoi with similar features

Apart from occasions concerning death a great number of kommoi express grief for other types of suffering, mental or physical, which is often represented as equal to death. So Tecmessa informs the chorus of Ajax's madness with the phrase θανάτῳ γὰρ ἴσον πάθος ἐκπεύσῃ (*Aj.* 215), while the chorus, considering the blindness of Oedipus as a suffering greater than death, suggest he would have better died (*O.T.* 1368; cf., similarly, their reaction to Polymestor's suffering in *Hec.* 1107-8). All the kommoi concerning suffering other than death are mostly self-laments.

The Sophoclean kommoi where a character laments his own misfortune (*Aj.* 348-429, *El.* 121-250, *Ant.* 806-882, *O.T.* 1307-1368, *Phil.* 1081-1217) present several features in common. As Popp (1971, 255) argues, the suffering of the Sophoclean hero is absolute, in the sense that it is self-imposed and not inflicted on him by the gods or another external power, as in Aeschylus or Euripides. The hero's choice to suffer, which the chorus blame on him (cf. *El.* 215ff, *Ant.* 875, *Phil.* 1095ff, 1165ff), accounts for their repeated appeals to him (especially in *Aj.*, *El.* and *Phil.*) to adopt a more flexible attitude to the present circumstances so as to deliver himself from his suffering. The heroes reject the practical advice of the chorus, since that would mean compromise and betrayal of their ideals, and stick to their beliefs: Ajax will finally kill himself, Electra will never cease lamenting, Philoctetes will never go to Troy. In *Ant.* and *O.T.* the catastrophe cannot be averted as Antigone is already on her way towards her tomb and Oedipus has blinded himself, so the chorus can only condemn their natural disposition which led them to suffer in this way. The chorus usually represent the

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[13]For further references see Johansen - Whittle (1980, II. on 116). *Cho.* 926 has been interpreted in a different way as well (see Longman 1954).

average people who cannot understand the mental suffering of the hero. The confrontation between the two reveals the heroic nature of the Sophoclean characters.[14]

The different attitudes to life they adopt are emphasized in the kommoi of *Aj.* and *O.T.* by the different modes of delivery: the iambic statements of the coryphaeus are contrasted with the lyric utterances of the actor. Similar is the case in the second kommos of *Ant.* (1261ff) which, however, is differentiated from the above two in the attitude of the mourner towards his suffering: Creon is completely shattered and can in no way claim the heroic stature and defiance of Ajax or Oedipus. In the above kommoi the attitude of the chorus towards the hero varies from sympathy to disapproval of his deeds/behaviour. It seems to be more positive in the three kommoi where they converse with him in lyric verses: in *Ant.* they try to console Antigone while in *El.* 233-34 and *Phil.* 1121-22, 1163-64[15] they express openly their good will towards the hero.[16] In the kommoi of *Aj.* and *O.T.* the role of the chorus is very much limited but strongly condemnatory of the actions of the hero. The least positive attitude of the chorus towards the mourner is found in *Ant.* 1261ff.

The hero asks his loyal companions for help, as, for example, Ajax to kill himself (*Aj.* 361) or Oedipus to be sent away from the city (*O.T.* 1340ff).[17] However, he does not get the help he needs, so his feeling of isolation increases, indicative of which are his invocations of the light or the natural surroundings (see p. 93). The hero's growing discontact with those around him also finds expression in the form and structure of the exchange. So Ajax does not respond to any of the coryphaeus' or Tecmessa's appeals with one exception (369) while Philoctetes ignores the chorus completely throughout the strophic part of the kommos and addresses them for the first time at the beginning of the epode (1169ff). On the other hand, in the kommoi of *Aj.* and *O.T.* the stanzas are gradually lengthened so that they become virtually monodies, a process especially noticeable in the third pair in *Aj.* and the second in *O.T.* (where, however, Oedipus is interrupted once by the chorus).

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[14]For an extensive study of the characteristics of the Sophoclean hero see Knox (1964).

[15]Phrases such as *El.* 233 and *Phil.* 1164 are parodied in Ar. *Wasps* 335.

[16]As Popp (1971, 253) notices, these three kommoi are the only cases among the Sophoclean amoibaia whose stanzas are divided into two. Owen (1936, 154ff) finds remarkable similarities between *El.* and *Phil.*, so he concludes that *El.* was written closely before *Phil.*

[17]Cf., similarly, Creon in *Ant.* 1320ff.

4. POSITION IN THE PLAY

End

The natural place for the lamentation of a disaster accomplished during the course of a play is obviously the exodos. Segal (1996, esp. 157ff) argues that laments and other ritual forms concluding a play have the effect of an emotional closure, and are appropriate to arouse the tragic emotions of pity and fear, thus leading to catharsis, which he associates primarily with these emotions. However, not all laments coming at the end of a play have a closure effect, as I will show below with some examples of kommoi. Three of them actually conclude the play: *Pers.* 908ff, *Sept.* 875ff, *Tro.* 1287ff (in *Pers.* and *Tro.* the catastrophe has been accomplished well before the play begins). In the first two the participants have time to indulge in lamentation, hence their great length, whereas in *Tro.* they have to perform their lament briefly since the situation compels them to leave (cf. 1328ff). Apart from the above three kommoi *Ant.* 1261ff nearly concludes the play (the final choral utterance does not add anything to the situation). In this kommos, however, the catastrophe is widened half way through it with the announcement of Eurydice's suicide, which interrupts the expected formal lament over Haemon's body.

Frequently the kommoi which come close to the end of a play but do not conclude it are interrupted by the sudden appearance of a character, who gives a different turn to the situation, so that they do not have the closure effect of the kommoi discussed above. So, for example, Aegisthus' appearance in *Ag.* 1577 makes any further attempts by the chorus to mourn Agamemnon impossible (cf. his threats against them in 1617ff, 1628ff). After the lament of the two sisters for Oedipus in *O.C.* 1670ff Theseus appears pointing to the inappropriateness of lamentation - his first words (1751) are rounded off by the final ones of the chorus (1777-78). Thus in both cases the lamentation is incomplete and so does not bring relief in the manner of the kommoi concluding a play, especially since the mourners are prevented from performing any further funerary rites (cf. the possession of Agamemnon's body by Clytemnestra in *Ag.*, Antigone's unfulfilled desire to visit Oedipus'

death-place in *O.C.*).[1] In two Euripidean plays the final kommos is followed by the appearance of a *deus ex machina*, Thetis in *Andr.* 1226 and the Dioscuri in *El.* 1233. In the first case the goddess considers the present happenings from a wider point of view and settles matters in such a way that the grief exhibited in the previous lament is resolved within a more optimistic future perspective. In *El.* the fate inflicted on Orestes and Electra, exile and separation, is still lamentable (cf. their anapaestic utterances in 1308ff), but in view of the deed they have committed this is probably the best possible solution.

Beginning

The three kommoi concerning Agamemnon's death which happened long ago, thus not arising from the action of the play, are naturally placed at its beginning: in the two *El.* plays they coincide with the parodos, in *Cho.* it comes later but still within the first half of the play. Their position evidently shows that they look forward. In fact, the kommos of *Cho.* initiates the action that follows, while those of the two *El.* plays emphasize the *ethos* of the heroine, that is, her insistence on mourning, which keeps her desire for revenge alive and thus determines her attitude in the rest of the play. Similarly to the above three kommoi the natural position of those prompted by a false death is either at the beginning of the play (as in *I.T.* 123ff and *Hel.* 164ff) or in the middle (S. *El.* 823ff), so that the expectations of the sufferer can be reversed later. The latter kommos constitutes the climax of the play since it is here that Electra's fortunes reach their lowest point; immediately afterwards the reverse movement starts, prefigured in Chrysothemis' first words (871 ὑφ' ἡδονῆς is contrasted to Electra's γόοι in 870).

Middle

In plays whose action is generally accepted as falling into two parts, a kommos often marks the turning-point. So, for example, the announcement of

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[1] For an extensive discussion of the frustrated ritual in the closing scene of *O.C.* see Easterling (1996, 174ff).

Ajax's death in *Aj.* 891ff closes the first part of the play concerning his shameful deed while the appearance of Teucer immediately afterwards marks the movement to the second part where the issue of his burial is at stake. Antigone's lamentation in *Ant.* 806ff closes the part of the play concerning her fate and is followed by the process of reversal in Creon's fortunes, which leads to his kommos in the final scene, thus balancing that of Antigone. Similarly, the announcement of Polydorus' death in *Hec.* 681ff marks the movement from the concern about his fate to the planning of Hecuba's revenge, which leads to Polymestor's blinding and subsequent lamentation (1056ff), so that the fortunes of doer and victim are symmetrically displayed.[2]

No fixed location

Kommoi as a reaction to a messenger report can be found in any part of the play, beginning, middle or end, and are usually followed by an extensive description of the disaster, as in *Pers.* 302-514 (with brief interruptions by the Queen), *Aj.* 284-327, *Herc.* 922-1015, *Pho.* 1356-1479 (with a brief interruption by the coryphaeus), *Rhes.* 756-803. Thus in all these cases the pattern is the same: a messenger or an actor playing his role arrives announcing briefly the disaster, those who are present react to the news with brief lamenting utterances and then he gives a full account of it. The latter is not always possible (e.g. in *Aj.* 891ff since Ajax dies alone, in *Ant.* 1278ff since the messenger report occurs at the end of the play), or necessary (e.g. in *Hec.* 681ff since Polydorus' ghost has already narrated his story in the prologue).

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[2]The appearance of Agamemnon at the end of each of the two lamenting scenes (726, 1109) reinforces this structural arrangement.

5. PARTICIPANTS

Apart from the choral exchanges in *Sept*. 875ff and E. *Supp*. 1123ff most of the kommoi are shared between the chorus and one actor or, occasionally, between the chorus and two actors. As regards the choral parts, the lyrics are delivered by the chorus as a whole, the epirrhemas by the coryphaeus, while the coryphaeus or individual members of the chorus possibly deliver the lyric parts whose utterances are very short[1] or whose rhythm is close to recitative (see p. 56, n. 12).

In most kommoi the actor is the principal mourner leading the lament while the chorus respond to his expressions of grief. The chorus act as the main mourner in few cases, i.e. when the actor cannot undertake that role, as in *Ag*. 1448ff and *Cho*. 973ff; when a messenger arrives and the chorus are the only ones present to express their grief to the news, as in *Pers*. 256ff, *Aj*. 201ff and *Herc*. 910ff; when they are the sufferers, as in *Eum*. 778ff. In all kommoi where a death is lamented the actors-mourners are close relatives of the dead, those to whom their loss is most heavily felt.[2] Exceptions to this are the cases of Xerxes in *Pers*. 908ff and Adrastus in E. *Supp*. 798ff, who have a different but still close relationship with the dead, namely, that of the leaders of an expedition recognizing their responsibility for its failure and the loss of their warriors. All the mourners lamenting a death are important characters with a major role in the play apart from the Muse in *Rhes*., who appears unexpectedly and without any preparation only to lament her son. This is probably justified by the fact that she appears as a *dea ex machina* - this is the only case in a kommos of a goddess lamenting for a mortal - and, as is usually the case, the appearance of the god comes unexpectedly.

The participation of a certain character in these kommoi, and not of another, and the role he plays in them are indicative of where the loss is felt. So Koonce (1962, 49) argues that the participation of two mourners in the lament for their father in *Cho*. 306ff and *O.C*. 1670ff suggests a family

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[1]So, for example, Jebb (1894, on 823-70) argues that in S. *El*. 823ff the chorus is represented by the coryphaeus while Burton (1980, 206) suggests that the utterances of one or two words assigned to the chorus are confined to individual singers. Similarly, Campbell (1879, 438, on 1737) argues that in *O.C*. 1737ff single members of the chorus converse with Antigone.

[2]The task of close relatives was considered so essential that Clytemnestra in *Ag*. 1541ff is ironically viewed as the one who will perform it.

ceremony from which other members are conspicuously absent, Clytemnestra and the two brothers respectively, as the former is the killer while the latter are cursed by their father. On the other hand, the participation of Clytemnestra in *Ag*. 1448ff and of Orestes in *Cho*. 973ff and their boasting at the killing of their victims is a distortion of the usual practice of mourning by the relatives of the deceased.

The employment of the chorus in lamentation for the dead in kommoi reflects the tradition of group participation in Greek funerals. In fact, Alexiou (1974, 13, 103) suggests that the kommos as a dramatic form may have developed from the antiphonal lament between a group of professional mourners and the solo deliveries of the kinswomen; correspondingly, Aristotle's definition (*Poet*. 1452b 24-25) makes it clear that the kommos is delivered by two separate groups of people, those involved in the catastrophe and those who sympathize with them but are not directly involved in it. So the chorus, although they are not always closely associated with the dead, retain some formal connection with him. In most kommoi the relation between the two is that of citizens/subjects to a member of the royal family/their leader, which may vary from loyalty (e.g. to Agamemnon in *Ag*. 1448ff and *Cho*. 306ff, Astyanax in *Tro*. 1209ff) and complete dependence on him (Ajax in *Aj*. 891ff) to a less close attachment, especially when he is a minor character (e.g. Haemon and Eurydice in *Ant*. 1261ff, Neoptolemus in *Andr*. 1173ff), but also when he is a more important one (e.g. Alcestis in *Alc*. 861ff, Rhesus in *Rhes*. 895ff). In *Pho*. 1335ff and *O.C*. 1670ff the chorus do not have any formal connection with the dead, being complete strangers to them when the play begins. The chorus may not even have met the dead who are lamented, as in the cases of Orestes in *I.T*. 123ff or Menelaus in *Hel*. 164ff, but they participate in the lament of the principal character out of sympathy for her. As an exception to the above cases, a kin relationship between the chorus and the dead exists in E. *Supp*. 798ff, where the usual relationships of actor and chorus to the dead are reversed (Adrastus is not related to the Argive leaders).

The choice of a specific type of chorus lays emphasis on the social environment in which the loss is felt. So, for example, the employment of the Persian elders in the final kommos of *Pers*. and of the Trojan women in that of *Tro*. gives the scenes the picture of a national disaster. Similarly, the employment of the Argive elders lamenting the death of Agamemnon in *Ag*. 1448ff shows the effect of his loss on the state while that of his household servants in *Cho*. 306ff concentrates on his family environment.

The principal mourner-kin to the dead is traditionally accompanied in his mourning by a group of people closely attached to him. So the solos of Andromache and Hecuba at the *prothesis* of Hector are followed by the groaning of the other women (*Il.* 24. 746, 760), Achilles is accompanied in his lamentation for Patroclus by the Achaeans (*Il.* 18. 314ff). Similarly, in the tragic kommoi the main mourner is usually accompanied by a chorus more or less closely attached to him, i.e. by belonging to the same social environment (e.g. Electra and the Mycenean women in S. *El.* 121ff, Electra and the women of the countryside in E. *El.* 167ff) or being his servants (e.g. the Greek women serving Iphigeneia and Helen in *I.T.* 123ff and *Hel.* 164ff respectively) or his subjects (e.g. the Theban elders and Creon in *Ant.* 1261ff, the Salaminian sailors and Ajax in *Aj.* 348ff, Phaedra and the Troezenean women in *Hipp.* 565ff).

However, the close relationship between the actor and the chorus is often exploited in kommoi, especially the Sophoclean ones, towards creating the reverse effect from what would be the case in a traditional lament, namely, to show the isolation of the character when his mourning/actions are rejected by his fellow-men who share the same social status as him (as in S. *El.* 121ff, E. *El.* 167ff) or have exhibited devotion and obedience to him in the past (as in *Aj.* 348ff, *O.T.* 1307ff, *Ant.* 1261ff). The same result is sought when a character is not accompanied in his mourning by an appropriate chorus, in which case the gap between them (usually emphasized by difference in sex and status) stresses his isolation. This is the case with Cassandra in *Ag.* 1072ff, Antigone in *Ant.* 806ff, and Antigone and Ismene in *O.C.* 1670ff, in all which cases the heroines are accompanied in their lamentation by a chorus of elders.

The attitude of the chorus towards the suffering of the hero and the extent to which they are affected by it leads to a variety of relationships between them. When they both share the same suffering there may be unanimity between them so that they intensify each other's grief (as in *Pers.* 908ff, *Tro.* 1287ff, E. *Supp.* 798ff) or each one of them may draw attention to themselves so that they emphasize their different positions as mourners (as in *Aj.* 891ff, *Tro.* 153ff, E. *Supp.* 1123ff). When the chorus are not personally affected by the disaster, they may focus exclusively on the suffering of the main character (as in *Andr.* 1197ff, *I.T.* 123ff, *Hel.* 164ff), thus magnifying it, or attempt consolation (as in S. *El.* 823ff, *Alc.* 861ff) or try to guide his thoughts in a different direction (usually disapproving of his behaviour), showing varying degrees of sympathy towards him (as in S. *El.* 121ff, *Ant.* 806ff, 1261ff, *Aj.* 348ff, *O.T.* 1307ff, *Phil.* 1081ff, *O.C.* 1670ff, *Med.* 131ff). The chorus may

also adopt two different attitudes in the same kommos, which is made obvious in its structure. So in *Andr.* 1173-96 they let Peleus express his grief individually interrupting him only with two trimeters, where they simply take his thought further, while in 1197-1225 they participate actively in his lament. Similarly, in *Hipp.* 817-51 they interrupt Theseus with two iambic trimeters attempting consolation, while before (811-16) and after (852-55) the monodic amoibaion they express their intense emotional situation in dochmiacs.

6. LANGUAGE

The great variety of kommoi is, reasonably, reflected in the diversity of their language. Some linguistic/stylistic features occur mostly in one category of kommoi, others in the majority or even all of them with various degrees of frequency in one or another type. Several of them appear inevitably in other forms of laments or non-lamenting passages, but often, as I will show, in their accumulation they are characteristic especially of kommoi. It is also interesting to trace to what extent, if any, they have their origins in ritual and whether they are defined by the stylistic preferences of each tragedian and the specific dramatic requirements of a scene.

Nouns

Formal and other terms used for 'dirge'

γόος is the most widespread term in tragedy referring to lamentation for the dead. Its power to reach and stir them is emphasized especially by Aeschylus: so in *Pers.* it causes Darius to raise from his grave (687 ψυχαγωγοῖς...γόοις, 697 ἦλθον σοῖς γόοις πεπεισμένος), in *Sept.* 854ff it is reported as assisting the journey of the dead to the underworld (cf. also its powerful description in 916ff), in *Cho.* 319ff it is regarded as the bridge between the worlds of the living and the dead. Γόος is also used with reference to advance lamentation for a death, as in *Ag.* 1445 and *Ant.* 883 for Cassandra's and Antigone's dirge for their own death respectively, as well as for misfortunes other than death, as in *Med.* 135, 205 for Medea's betrayal by Jason and in *Ion* 769 for Creousa's childlessness.

θρῆνος[1] is another widespread term in the same context, although it is used less frequently than γόος. Apart from the dirge for the dead, it can also denote advance lamentation for a death (cf. Cassandra in *Ag.* 1322-23) or for misfortunes other than death: so in the second stasimon of *I.T.* 1089ff the

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[1] A similar noun is θρήνημα, used three times in tragedy, all in Euripides and in the plural (*El.* 215, *Hel.* 174, *Or.* 132). Of the same root are the nouns θρηνητήρ, θρηνητής, which are *hapax* in tragedy (*Pers.* 938, *Ag.* 1075 respectively).

chorus lament for the loss of their homeland (1095 θρήνους); Electra's monody in *Or.* 982ff is a lament for the fall of the Pelopids (985 ἵν' ἐν θρήνοισιν ἀναβοάσω).[2]

Although in Homer there is a clear distinction between θρῆνος and γόος (see pp. 20-21), this difference is not retained in tragedy.[3] Even though the two terms are not exactly identical (for example, θρῆνος is not used like γόος to rouse the spirit of the dead nor does it have its ecstatic character), they are often used interchangeably. So the great kommos of *Cho.* is called γόος (321, 330) as well as θρῆνος (335, 342); similarly Electra's lament for Agamemnon in S. *El.* (81, 139, 243 and 88, 232, 255 respectively); the lament for Oedipus in the exodos of *O.C.* is announced by the messenger as γόος (1668), but is later defined by Theseus and the chorus as θρῆνος (1751, 1778 respectively). The juxtaposition of the two terms is also frequent, e.g. S. *El.* 104 θρήνων στυγερῶν τε γόων, E. *Supp.* 87-88 τίνων γόους...νεκρῶν τε θρήνους (indicative is also *Sept.* 1063-64 ἄγος μονόκλαυτον ἔχων θρῆνον). They are also frequently cited with other words pointing to lamentation or weeping, as in *Pers.* 705 κλαυμάτων...καὶ γόων, *Ant.* 883 ἀοιδὰς καὶ γόους, *Andr.* 92 θρήνοισι καὶ γόοισι καὶ δακρύμασιν, *I.T.* 144-47 θρήνοις...ἐλέγοις...οἴκτοισιν.

ἔλεγος was another formal term for the dirge for the dead. Ancient lexicographers identify it with θρῆνος, deriving its etymology from the laudation of the dead or the cry ε ε.[4] In the extant tragedies it is used only by Euripides, especially with reference to a lament by the heroine before or during the parodos (*Tro.* 119, *I.T.* 146, *Hel.* 185, *Hypsip.* I. iii. 9) but also within a choral song (*I.T.* 1091), concerning not only lamentation for the dead (as in the two instances of *I.T.*) but other misfortunes as well (as in the other cases). In Ar. *Birds* 218 it is used to denote the lament of the nightingale for Itys.[5]

ἰάλεμος (ἰήλεμος), from the cry ἰά (ἰή). The scholiast of Apoll. Rhod. (IV 1304) considers it as equivalent to θρῆνος and in *Et. Magn.* it is defined as an εἶδος θρήνου. In the extant tragedies it is found only in lyrics, in some cases referring explicitly to lamentation for the dead (cf. E. *Supp.* 281, *Tro.* 604, 1304

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[2]For a classification of the uses of θρῆνος and γόος see also Alexiou (1974, 225, n. 6).

[3]Later lexicographers also define γόος as another synonym for θρῆνος (cf. *Suid.*, *Et. Magn.*, *Hesych.* s.v. γόος).

[4]See s. v. ἔλεγος *Et. Gud.* ὁ θρῆνος· παρὰ τὸ εὖ λέγειν τοὺς θανόντας, *Et. Magn.* θρῆνος ὁ τοῖς τεθνεῶσιν ἐπιλεγόμενος. Εἴρηται δὲ παρὰ τὸ ἔ ἔ λέγειν ἐν τοῖς τάφοις."Η ἀπὸ τοῦ εὖ λέγειν δι' αὐτοῦ τοῦ θρήνου τοὺς κατοιχομένους. For further references from ancient sources see Page (1936, 209-10).

[5]For ἔλεγος see also Kannicht (1969, II. 73).

ἰαλέμῳ τοὺς θανόντας ἀπύεις, *Pho.* 1033-34, *Rhes.* 895-96 ἰαλέμῳ αὐθιγενεῖ τέκνον σ' ὀλοφύρομαι), but it can also refer to lamentation for somebody still alive (A. *Supp.* 115, *Herc.* 110) or to another disaster (*Or.* 1390 and, possibly, *O.T.* 1219[6]). The use of ἰάλεμος for the mourning of the Danaids in A. *Supp.* 115 and the unique ἰηλεμιστρία[7] in *Cho.* 424 indicate that its origin was probably oriental.[8]

In *Tro.* 514 the phrase ἐπικήδειος ὠδά is used for the song of the Muse over the fallen Troy, which is thus compared to the death of a person (for the same phrase cf. Plato *Laws* VII 800e ἐπικήδειοι ὠδαί of the Carian singers).[9] The noun ἐπικήδειον was used by Alexandrian and Roman scholars in association with the *prothesis* of the dead, as distinct from θρῆνος which was not circumscribed in time, i.e. it might have been sung before the burial, after it or at the anniversaries.[10] Emphasis was also placed on the fact that the ἐπικήδειον has a eulogistic character,[11] which, however, is a characteristic of θρῆνος as well (see p. 29, n. 6) .

The word ἴακχος can also be used for the dirge for the dead in an appropriate context, as in *Tro.* 829 with reference to the mourning of a bird for its children, 1230 in the phrase νεκρῶν ἴακχον. In two cases the term νόμος is used in the same context: *Andr.* 1199 νόμῳ τῷ νερτέρων, *Hec.* 685-86 νόμον βακχεῖον.[12] Sometimes it is defined in terms of a ὕμνος, as in the oxymoronic expressions δυσκέλαδον ὕμνον 'Ερινύος (*Sept.* 868), θεῶν <τῶν> κατὰ γᾶς ὅδ' ὕμνος (*Cho.* 475). As I have already pointed out (regarding the interchangeable use of θρῆνος and γόος), the use of different terms to describe the same song

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[6]See Pearson (1924). The text, however, in this line is much disputed; some readings do not even include this term, which is the only instance in the extant Sophoclean tragedies.

[7]See *Hesych.* s.v. ἰηλεμίστριας· θρηνητρίας.

[8]For the use of the word by other ancient authors see Reiner (1938, 6-7).

[9]For more instances of the use of this term in later literature see Reiner (1938, 3).

[10]Cf., for example, *Et. Magn.* s.v. θρῆνος· διαφέρει δὲ ἐπικηδείου· ὅτι τὸ μὲν ἐπικήδειον, παρ' αὐτὸ τὸ κῆδος, ἔτι τοῦ σώματος προκειμένου, λέγεται· ὁ δὲ θρῆνος, οὐ περιγραφόμενος χρόνῳ, and the similar phrasing in *Et. Gud.* s.v. ἐπικήδειον, Eustath. on *Od.* 1673 (vers. 75). *Suid.* s.v. Διονύσιος Βυζάντιος states that the θρῆνος was full of ἐπικήδεια (ἔστι δὲ ποίημα μεστὸν ἐπικηδείων).

[11]See *Et. Gud.* above: ἐπικήδειον καὶ θρῆνος διαφέρει· ἐπικήδειον μὲν γάρ ἐστιν ἔπαινος τοῦ τελευτήσαντος μετά τινος μετρίου σχετλιασμοῦ. Cf., similarly, Eustath. on *Od.* 1673 (vers. 75).

[12]Cf. also Ar. *Birds* 210-11 νόμους...θρηνεῖς.

was usual: so the kommos of *Cho.* is referred to as γόος (321, 330), θρῆνος (335, 342), κομμός (423), ὕμνος (475); the invocation of Darius in *Pers.* is described in terms of ὕμνοις (625), γόοις (687, 697).[13] In particular, the parallel uses of θρῆνος and ὕμνος attracted the attention of Plato in *Laws* III. 700d κεραννύντες δὲ θρήνους τε ὕμνοις, where he complains that the poets of his day confounded dirges with hymns. The general context is that of the decadence that followed in the years after the Persian Wars, in contrast to the situation before that time, when καὶ τούτῳ (sc. τῷ ὕμνῳ) ἐναντίον ἦν ᾠδῆς ἕτερον εἶδος - θρήνους (*Laws* III. 700b), an opposition which must point to the contrast between a song addressed to gods and a song addressed to men.[14] Often in tragedy the dirge is contrasted to the joyful, normally lyre-accompanied, paean, which is also used catachrestically for θρῆνος (cf. *Sept.* 869-70 Ἀίδα τ' ἐχθρὸν παιᾶν' ἐπιμέλπειν, *Cho.* 151 παιᾶνα τοῦ θανόντος, 342-43 ἀντὶ δὲ θρήνων...παιών, *Alc.* 424, *Tro.* 578, *I.T.* 183-85, *Hel.* 177-78), or to other joyful sounds (cf. *Cho.* 340-41, *Alc.* 922).

Nouns denoting lamentation, wailing

A variety of nouns is employed both within kommoi and outside them to denote wailing, groaning. I summarize them here:

αἴαγμα is found only in the Euripidean lyrics, always in the plural (cf. *Alc.* 873, *Hel.* 186, *Pho.* 335, 1519).

κωκυτός and κώκυμα (the latter mostly in the plural) are frequent in tragedy, especially in trimeter passages. In *Pho.* 1350 the chorus exhort themselves to raise the dirge with the phrase ἀνάγετε κωκυτόν.

ὄδυρμα and ὀδυρμός (both mostly in the plural and in trimeter passages) are also used frequently in tragedy. The dead Astyanax is referred to as πικρὸν ὄδυρμα in *Tro.* 1227.

οἶκτος is commonly used to describe the expression of grief for the dead. Its occurrences in kommoi include *Cho.* 411, *Tro.* 155 (with *fig. etym.* οἴκτους οὓς οἰκτίζῃ), *I.T.* 147, *Hel.* 164. In the last two cases it is combined with other synonyms to describe the lamenting song of the heroine.

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[13]Cf., similarly, in Ar. *Birds*: νόμους...ὕμνων (210), θρηνεῖς (211), μέλεσιν (213), ἐλέγοις (218). For a discussion of this passage see Silk (1980, 100ff).

[14]See Harvey (1955, 165), who argues that Plato does not refer only to the music that accompanied these compositions but to other formal differences between them as well.

οἰμωγή and οἴμωγμα (the first mostly, the latter only in trimeters) are also common in tragic language. In kommoi οἰμωγή is found in S. *El*. 123.
πένθος is also commonly used to refer to mourning for the dead. Its occurrences in kommoi include *Cho*. 333, S. *El*. 847, *O.C.* 1708, *Alc*. 895, *Hel*. 166 (as alternative to δάκρυσιν ἢ θρήνοις). Of the same root are the rare nouns πένθημα (found in *Cho*. 432, E. *Supp*. 1035), πενθητήρ (*Pers*. 946, *Sept*. 1062) and πενθήτρια (only in *Hipp*. 805).
στόνος is quite common in tragedy, used mostly in lyrics (in kommoi it is found in *Sept*. 900). Of the same root are στοναχή, also mostly in lyrics (cf. in kommoi *Aj*. 203, E. *El*. 195, *Or*. 204), στεναγμός, far commoner in both lyric and trimeter passages (for its use in kommoi cf. E. *Supp*. 798), and the less common στέναγμα (in the plural, for which cf. E. *Supp*. 801).

Emotive nouns

Some nouns with emotional weight are frequent in lamenting language. I list them below in order of frequency in kommoi.
δάκρυ is the most widespread of them, with particular prominence and in combination with other emotive words in Euripides, as, for example, in *El*. 181-82 δάκρυσι νυχεύω, δακρύων δέ μοι μέλει, 193, *Hel*. 172 (followed by the phrase πάθεσι πάθεα), 195 δάκρυα δάκρυσί μοι, 365, 366 + ἄχεά τ' ἄχεσι δάκρυα δάκρυσιν[15] ἔλαβε πάθεα+.
ἄχος: Some characteristic examples of its instances in kommoi are: *Pers*. 258, *Cho*. 416, 419, *Aj*. 948, 957, *O.C*. 1712, 1722, *I.T*. 197 (in the characteristic cumulative Euripidean manner ἄχεα ἄχεσιν), *Ion* 764, 777.
ἄλγος: Its occurrences in kommoi include S. *El*. 141, *Phil*. 1169-70 (ἄλγημα), E. *Supp*. 1119, 1125, 1148, 1157, *Tro*. 172 (in the *fig. etym*. ἐπ' ἄλγεσι δ' ἀλγυνθῶ), 1310.
πῆμα: E.g. *Pers*. 1026, 1038, *Aj*. 935, 954, E. *Supp*. 818, *Pho*. 1338.
πάθος: E.g. *O.T*. 1297, 1330, *Andr*. 1179, E. *Supp*. 1121, *Pho*. 1341.
πόνος: E.g. *Sept*. 994, *Cho*. 466, *Ant*. 1276 in the phrase πόνοι δύσπονοι, *Hipp*. 817 ὤμοι ἐγὼ πόνων.
Less frequent are μόρος and πότμος. Among the occurrences of the first in kommoi are: *Ag*. 1495=1519, *Cho*. 441, 444, *Ant*. 1266, 1292, 1313, 1329.

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[15]Aristophanes parodies the frequency of these two nouns in Euripides' lamenting passages in *Frogs* 1353-54 ἐμοὶ δ' ἄχε' ἄχεα κατέλιπε, δάκρυα δάκρυα δ' ἀπ' ὀμμάτων.

Insistence on this notion in the latter case, combined with that of πότμος (881, 1296, 1346), indicates Creon's preoccupation with his evil fate. In *Hec.* 695 the two notions are juxtaposed in a symmetrical phrase, τίνι μόρῳ θνήσκεις, τίνι πότμῳ κεῖσαι;

Verbs

Verbs denoting lamentation, wailing

As in the case of nouns, a great variety of verbs is used in tragedy to denote lamentation and wailing. I list them briefly, with particular emphasis on their use in kommoi.

αἰάζω (from the cry αἰαῖ) is fairly common in tragedy. Its occurrences in kommoi include *Pers.* 922 (with a personification of the Persian land), *Aj.* 904, *Herc.* 1053 (with θρῆνον as object), *Tro.* 158. In *Tro.* 198 it is used in the compound form ἐξαιάζοις.

γοῶμαι is used more frequently in iambic passages than in lyrics. It is found in *Pers.* 1073 in the imperative γοᾶσθε (cf., similarly, *Tro.* 289). θρηνῶ is a much more widespread verb in tragedy than γοῶμαι, used extensively in both iambic and lyric passages (the compound καταθρηνῶ is also found in E. *El.* 1326). As in the case of the equivalent nouns, there does not seem to be any noticeable difference in the meaning of the two verbs or the intensity of grief they express. So θρηνῶ is used of Electra's mourning for Agamemnon a long time after his death (cf. S. *El.* 94, 530) but also of the lamentation of Ajax's mother for her son as soon as she is informed of his madness (cf. *Aj.* 631).[16] Similarly, γοῶμαι expresses Deianeira's many lamentations for Heracles' long absence but also Hyllus' immediate reaction to her death (cf. *Trach.* 51, 937 respectively). The almost identical meaning of the two terms is reflected in phrases such as θρηνεῖτ'...καί...γόοις...καλεῖσθέ μ' (*Pers.* 686-88), ἄλις μοι τεθρήνηται γόοις (*Phil.* 1401).[17]

θρέομαι is not common in tragedy. It is used only by Aeschylus and Euripides, always with reference to women and in the present tense, in the following cases: *Sept.* 78 (where some mss give θρεῦμαι), *Ag.* 1165, A. *Supp.* 113, *Hipp.*

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[16]For the lament of Ajax's mother see Hamilton (1982).

[17]According to Pearson's text (1924).

363 (in the last two cases with πάθεα μέλεα as object), *Med.* 51. All the above occurrences are in lyrics apart from *Med.* 51.

κλαίω, in the active or middle voice, is used frequently by the mourner, simple (e.g. *Sept.* 920, *Cho.* 457, E. *Supp.* 1160 ἔκλαυσα, an instantaneous aorist) as well as compound with the prepositions κατά (cf. E. *El.* 113=128, 156, *I.T.* 149) and ἀνά (cf. *I.T.* 230).

κωκύω is used always with reference to women, as in Homer.[18] Not necessarily so, however, as compound, occurring with the prepositions ἀπό (cf. *Ag.* 1544), ἀνά (cf. *Pers.* 468, *Ant.* 423, 1227), ἐπί (cf. S. *El.* 283 in the redundant phrase κλαίω, τέτηκα, κἀπικωκύω).

ὀδύρομαι is frequent in tragedy, found also in the form δύρομαι (e.g. *Pers.* 583, *O.T.* 1218, *Med.* 159) or compound with the preposition ἀπό (cf. *P.V.* 637, S. *El.* 1122).

οἰκτίζω is used in the middle voice in the sense of 'bewail', e.g. *Tro.* 155, *I.T.* 486, *Hel.* 1053.

οἰμώζω (from the cry οἴμοι) is common in tragedy (for its use in kommoi cf. *Aj.* 940, 963). It is also found compound as ἀποιμώζω (e.g. *Cho.* 1014, *Phil.* 278, *Med.* 31) and ἐξοιμώζω (cf. *Aj.* 317 ἐξώμωξεν οἰμωγάς, *Ant.* 427 γόοισιν ἐξώμωξεν).

ὀλοφύρομαι is not common in tragic language, as it is in Homer. It is used simple in S. *El.* 148 and *Rhes.* 896 and compound with the preposition κατά in *I.T.* 644 and *Or.* 339.

ὀτοτύζω (from the cry ὀτοτοῖ) is not common in tragedy either. It is found simple in the passive voice in *Cho.* 327 and compound with ἀνά in *Ag.* 1074, *Hel.* 371 (with βοάν as object), and ἐπί in *Pho.* 1038.[19]

πενθῶ is widespread in tragedy. Its occurrences in lamenting passages include *Pers.* 545 πενθοῦσι γόοις ἀκορεστοτάτοις, A. *Supp.* 64 πενθεῖ μὲν οἶκτον ἠθέων (with reference to the nightingale), *O.T.* 1320.

στενάζω is also very common. Its use is especially noticeable in close antiphony in the form of exhortation: στέναζε in *Pers.* 1046, *Herc.* 1064 (in the latter case answered by στενάζω) and *Tro.* 1229, στενάζεθ' in *Herc.* 914. Other occurrences in kommoi include *Eum.* 788=818, *Ant.* 882, *O.C.* 1672, *Ion* 769, and as compound with the preposition ἀνά *Cho.* 335, *Aj.* 930, *I.T.* 656.

στένω (of which στενάζω is frequentative) is commonly used in tragedy, only in the present and imperfect tense. Among its instances in kommoi are: *Sept.*

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[18]For the verbal distinctions used in Homer to denote the different tone of female and male lamenting voices see McClure (1999, 42ff).

[19]For this verb see also Diggle (1994b, 480).

901 (with anaphoric repetition στένουσι πύργοι, στένει πέδον), *Ag.* 1144, E. *Supp.* 820, *Herc.* 900, *Hel.* 186. It is also found compound with tmesis twice in kommoi: *O.C.* 1709-10 ἀνὰ γὰρ ὄμμα σε τόδ'...στένει, *Herc.* 1045 κατά σε δακρύοις στένω.[20] Its most impressive use in a lamenting passage is found in the first stasimon of *P.V.* (see p. 104).

στενάχω is a poetic lengthened form of στένω, also found only in the present and imperfect tense. It is very common in Homer,[21] but less frequent in tragedy (cf. *P.V.* 99, S. *El.* 133, 141, 1076, *Tro.* 106, *Pho.* 1552), where it is also found compounded with ἐπί (cf. *Ag.* 790, *O.T.* 185).

Other verbs

Frequent in kommoi are also the verbs δακρύω, τέγγομαι and διαίνω. δακρύω occurs in *Ag.* 1490=1514, S. *El.* 152, 829, *Andr.* 1201 and *Pho.* 1344, τέγγομαι, which is less common, in *Pers.* 1065 and *Hipp.* 853-54. διαίνω is rare in tragedy. It is used four times by Aeschylus, all in the kommoi of *Pers.* (257, 1038, 1047, 1065), in three of which (257, 1038, 1065) in the form of exhortation (its only other occurrence in tragedy is in S. fr. 210. 35).

τήκω, in the active or, usually, the middle voice, is frequently used in the Sophoclean and Euripidean kommoi with reference to a suffering female figure,[22] e.g. S. *El.* 123 (according to Pearson's text, 1924), 187 the compound κατατάκομαι, 835, *Med.* 141, 159 (exceptionally, in E. *El.* 1209 a male character, Orestes, uses it for himself). Its use especially for women is parodied in Ar. *Wasps* 317, delivered by an old man, Philocleon.

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[20]As Stevens (1971, on 837) remarks, καταστένειν is a strong verb, as it includes the actual demonstration of grief.

[21]Cf. especially the formulaic expression ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο... to denote the antiphonal wailing of a group of mourners (see p. 20).

[22]Its use in this context is also frequent in Homer: cf. *Il.* 3. 176, *Od.* 19. 204, 208, 264 with reference to Helen and Penelope respectively.

Adjectives

Adjectives describing lamenting cries/gestures of grief

Aeschylus and Euripides, to an extent much greater than Sophocles, often use in their kommoi adjectives (Aeschylus with preference for compound forms,[23] sometimes found in an impressive accumulation) to describe lamenting cries or gestures of mourning. The most characteristic are mentioned below.

Pers. 280-81 ἄποτμον, δυσαιανῆ βοάν: ἄποτμος ('unhappy, ill-starred') is rare in tragedy; it is used three times, all in lyrics, only in this case by Aeschylus and twice by Euripides (*Hipp.* 1144, *Pho.* 1306, in both cases in the phrase πότμον ἄποτμον). δυσαιανής ('most melancholy') is found only here in tragedy.

Pers. 936-37 κακοφάτιδα βοάν, κακομέλετον ἰάν: Both adjectives, of a similar meaning ('ill-sounding, ill-omened', 'of evil augury'), are *hapax* in tragedy.

Pers. 940 πολύδακρυν ἰαχάν: This adjective is used only by Aeschylus and Euripides, in this sense ('tearful') in *Cho.* 449 to describe γόος and in E. *El.* 126 in the phrase πολύδακρυν ἀδονάν. In *Cho.* 333 the similar one πολυδάκρυτος characterizes πένθη. Both adjectives are Homeric,[24] the latter found in the combination πολυδακρύτοιο γόοιο in *Od.* (19. 213, 251, 21. 57) and parodied in Ar. *Thesm.* 1040.[25] Similarly, in *Pers.* 947 ἀρίδακρυς (an adjective found only in Aeschylus) describes γόος.

Pers. 941-42 αἰανῆ πάνδυρτον δύσθροον αὐδάν: αἰανής is found only in Aeschylus and Sophocles.[26] In the sense 'persistent, wearisome' to describe a cry it is also used in *Pers.* 636 αἰανῆ δύσθροα βάγματα.[27] πάνδυρτος ('all-plaintive') is used in the antiphonal reply of the chorus in *Pers.* 944, in *Sept.* 969 (with reference to one of the brothers), S. *El.* 1077 πάνδυρτος ἀηδών, *Hec.* 212 πανδύρτοις θρήνοις. The only occurrences of δύσθροος ('ill-sounding') in

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[23]In fact, compounds are the most significant feature of the Aeschylean style: see Earp (1948, 6ff).

[24]See Sideras (1971, 71, 182).

[25]Both adjectives are also used of persons (in the sense 'much-weeping'): for πολύδακρυς cf. *Pho.* 366, for πολυδάκρυτος *Hec.* 651, *Tro.* 1105. In Ar. *Birds* 212 Itys is called πολύδακρυς (in the passive sense 'much-wept').

[26]For this adjective see Silk (1983, 304-5, 313-14) and especially Degani (1962).

[27]For the cries of the chorus in this passage see Haldane (1972).

tragedy are in *Pers.*, apart from 942 and 636 mentioned above, in 1077 δυσθρόοις γόοις.

Pers. 1053 στονόεσσα πλαγά: This adjective is found only in Aeschylus and Sophocles: see especially S. *El.* 147 στονόεσσ'...ὄρνις, *O.T.* 187 στονόεσσα γῆρυς (similarly, in *Il.* 24. 721 it describes the ἀοιδή for the dead Hector). A similar adjective is πολύστονος, describing Medea's cries in *Med.* 205. In *Sept.* 845 it is used for the two brothers in the passive sense, 'mournful'.

Pers. 1040=1048, 1066 ἀντίδουπα points to the antiphonal character of the dirge.[28] Euripides uses similar adjectives in his kommoi in the same context, i.e. ἀντίφωνα (*Supp.* 800-1), ἀντιψάλμους ᾠδάς (*I.T.* 149), as well as the expression διάδοχά σοι ('in turn') in *Andr.* 1200 and *Tro.* 1307, in the first case referring to the delivery of lamenting cries, in the second to the performance of ritual gestures (for the use of this adjective in a similar context cf. E. *Supp.* 71-72). In *Hel.* 174 the responsive role of the chorus to Helen's lament is marked by the phrase μουσεῖα θρηνήμασι ξυνῳδά (for a similar phrase cf. *Or.* 132-33 and further E. *Supp.* 73, *Pho.* 1518). It is noticeable that there are no examples of similar adjectives in the Sophoclean kommoi, where antiphonal effects are considerably restricted (see pp. 107ff).

Sept. 916-19: The power of γόος is described with a series of adjectives, δαϊκτήρ ('heart-rending'), αὐτόστονος αὐτοπήμων ('lamenting for itself and for its own woes'), δαϊόφρων ('miserable'), οὐ φιλογαθής ('not mirthful'), δακρυχέων[29] ('causing the shedding of tears'). δαϊκτήρ is found as δαΐκτωρ in A. *Supp.* 798 (defining γάμος), but the rest of the adjectives are *hapax* in tragedy.

Cho. 425-26 ἀπρικτόπληκτα πολυπάλακτα ἐπασσυτεροτριβῆ ὀρέγματα: Despite the uncertainty of the text, these heavy compound epithets do not seem to appear elsewhere. They describe the passionate mourning gestures of the chorus, suggesting tight fists, beating, spattering of blood and close repetition.[30]

S. *El.* 193 οἰκτρὰ αὐδά: οἰκτρός is frequently used in tragedy to characterize a lamenting cry, as in *Aj.* 629, S. *El.* 1067-68, *I.T.* 227, *Hel.* 184. In Homer we also find οἰκτροτάτην ὄπα (*Od.* 11. 421) and as adverb οἴκτρ' ὀλοφυρόμενη (cf. *Od.* 4. 719, 10. 409).

S. *El.* 243 ὀξυτόνων γόων: The piercing sound of the γόος is frequently emphasized in tragedy with similar adjectives, as in *Sept.* 320 ὀξυγόοις λιταῖσιν, 1023 ὀξυμόλποις οἰμώγμασιν, *Ag.* 57 γόον ὀξυβόαν, *Aj.* 321 ὀξέων

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[28]For this adjective see also p. 146, n. 1.

[29]This adjective has Homeric resonances: see Sideras (1971, 82).

[30]See Garvie (1986, on 425-8).

κωκυμάτων, 630 ὀξυτόνους ᾠδάς, *Ant.* 1316 ὀξυκώκυτον πάθος. As Kaimio (1977, 180) notices, ὀξύς is a favourite characterization of sound in Sophocles, while (190) there are no similar instances of this adjective in Euripides.

In *I.T.* 144-47 a series of musical terms and adjectives is employed to describe Iphigeneia's lament:

δυσθρηνήτοις θρήνοις, an oxymoron. This adjective occurs once more in tragedy (*Ant.* 1211 defining ἔπος).

οὐκ εὐμούσου μολπᾶς: εὔμουσος is used only here in the extant complete tragedies.

ἀλύροις ἐλέγοις, i.e. unaccompanied by the lyre, thus wild, dirges. ἄλυρος is characteristic in Euripides, expressing the notion of negated song ('lyreless muse'):[31] so also in *Alc.* 447, *Hel.* 185 and *Pho.* 1028 defining ὕμνοι, ἔλεγος and μοῦσα respectively. These oxymora account for the fact that joyful songs and dances are performed as a representation of joyless occasions. In other words artistic lamenting songs are used to convey pain and suffering. Aeschylus also uses the figure of unmusical song (cf. *Ag.* 990-91, *Eum.* 331-33), but not Sophocles, who uses ἄλυρος in *O.C.* 1222 (its only other instance in tragedy) with reference to death.

κηδείοις οἴκτοισιν: In this sense ('of a funeral or tomb') κήδειος is used three times in Aeschylus (*Cho.* 87, 226, 538), none of which, however, refers to a dirge.

E. *El.* 1211 ἰήιος ('mournful, grievous') γόος: This adjective is used in a similar context in *Pho.* 1036 ἰηΐηιον βοάν, ἰηΐηιον μέλος.

Hel. 188 γοερόν ('mournful') defines νόμον (if we accept Matthiae's suggestion). A similar use of this adjective is found in *Hec.* 84 μέλος γοερόν.

As is evident from the above, accumulations of adjectives describing lamenting cries/gestures of grief are characteristic mainly of the Aeschylean and to a smaller degree of the Euripidean kommoi. It is also noticeable that Aeschylus uses them to denote wild emotions whereas Euripides offers a more 'lyric' picture of grief. In any case, accumulations of such adjectives are normally found at the beginning of a kommos (cf. *Pers.* 936ff, *I.T.* 144ff) or of one of its sections (cf. *Cho.* 425ff), and always while the participants deliver long utterances, since the agitation prevalent in multiply divided stanzas does not allow the use of a series of them. Unlike the Aeschylean and Euripidean kommoi, in the Sophoclean ones extensive self-references to lamentation with the subsequent decorative adjectives are missing, which is in accordance with the restricted number of verbs and nouns of similar content in them, in

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[31] For an extensive treatment of this idea see Segal (1993a, 16ff).

comparison to their extensive use in the Aeschylean and Euripidean kommoi. In general, Sophocles, unlike the other two tragedians, rarely uses metaphors of singing for lamentation or shows self-awareness of his own poetics.[32]

Adjectives describing one's misfortune

Tragic language employs a variety of adjectives to describe one's misfortune, which are found with remarkable concentration in kommoi. They are listed below in order of frequency.

τάλας is the most widespread of these adjectives in tragedy, used much more extensively by Sophocles than by Aeschylus and, similarly, by Euripides than by Sophocles.[33] Its occurrences in kommoi are impressive, often very close to one another, e.g. *Ag.* 1107, 1136, 1138, 1143, 1158, *Phil.* 1083, 1088, 1104, 1187, 1189, 1196, *O.C.* 1683, 1692, 1711, 1715, 1727, 1734, *Hipp.* 811, 816, 817, 822, 826, 841, 852, 860, 875. They include, as with the other adjectives mentioned below, cases when the sufferer points to his misery[34] or is addressed by his partner or they may characterize the dead or other objects/situations. Apart from its simple form, we also find the compounds δυστάλαινα (*Aj.* 410, *O.C.* 1734, *Hipp.* 570) and ταλαίφρων (*Aj.* 903, *Ant.* 866, 877).[35]

μέλεος is another widespread adjective in the context of lamentation. Like τάλας, it is more common in Sophocles than in Aeschylus while Euripides makes the most frequent use of it. Some of its instances in kommoi where the mourner points to his misery are: *Pers.* 932, *Ant.* 1319, 1341, *Hipp.* 845, *Herc.* 886. In *Sept.* 963 the compounds μελεοπόνος, μελεοπαθής are attributed to the dead brothers.

τλήμων, like the two previous adjectives, is found in an increasing number of instances from Aeschylus to Sophocles and Euripides, which is reflected in its occurrences in their kommoi as well. As in the previous cases, it is frequently attributed to the sufferers by themselves, e.g. *Pers.* 912, *Aj.* 893, *O.T.* 1332, *Phil.*

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[32]See Segal (1993a, 18-19).

[33]Here, as elsewhere, references to comparative frequency of occurrence must take account of the fact that the surviving plays of Euripides outnumber those of Aeschylus or Sophocles by a factor of approximately 2. 5.

[34]In this case the adjectives may be followed for emphasis by ἐγώ, e.g. *Pers.* 909, *Ant.* 1310, *Andr.* 1179.

[35]παντάλας also occurs in tragedy (*Pers.* 637, *Andr.* 140, *Hec.* 667).

1101, *Tro.* 185, 191, 1233. Apart from the simple form the compound παντλάμων is found in S. *El.* 150 characterizing Niobe.

δύστηνος is used sparingly by Aeschylus while the other two tragedians use it extensively. Xerxes and Oedipus point to themselves with this adjective as soon as they appear (*Pers.* 909, *O.T.* 1307 respectively). Unlike the previous ones, it is used mostly of persons, thus its attribution to Troy in *Tro.* 173 is suitable to personify it. In E. *Supp.* 967 we find the superlative degree of the adverb, δυστανοτάτως.

ἄθλιος is not very common in Aeschylus but is used extensively by Sophocles and Euripides. Philoctetes uses it for himself in *Phil.* 1214, similarly Iphis in E. *Supp.* 1076, but it is more frequently attributed to the dead by the mourners (in *Sept.* 970 the compound πανάθλιος is used in this context).

δείλαιος is rare in Aeschylus, but more frequent in Sophocles and Euripides. Its occurrences in kommoi include *Ant.* 1272, 1310-11 in the polyptoton δείλαιος ἐγώ...δειλαίᾳ...δύᾳ, similarly S. *El.* 849 δειλαία δειλαίων κυρεῖς, *Tro.* 192.

Apart from the above mentioned adjectives some others of a similar content are less frequent in kommoi.

δυσδαίμων is used in *Sept.* 926, *O.T.* 1302, E. *El.* 199, *I.T.* 203 in the oxymoron δυσδαίμων δαίμων. In *Alc.* 865 Admetus characterizes himself with the rare compound βαρυδαίμων (its only other occurrence in the surviving complete tragedies is in *Tro.* 112). A similar adjective rare in tragedy but frequent in comedy is κακοδαίμων (cf. *Hipp.* 1362 where Hippolytus points to himself).

δυστυχής is very common in Euripides, unlike its restricted use in the other two tragedians. In kommoi it occurs in *Eum.* 791, *Andr.* 1201, 1214. A similar adjective is κακοτυχής, used only by Euripides a few times, all in lyrics (cf. *Hipp.* 669, 679, *Med.* 1274, *Herc.* 133), in all cases apart from the last one in association with women.

δύσποτμος is used sparingly by all three tragedians. In kommoi it is found in *Ant.* 869, *Phil.* 1120, E. *Supp.* 811, and in *Pho.* 1348 the comparative δυσποτμώτερα. A similar adjective is βαρύποτμος, rare in tragedy, found only in Sophocles and Euripides in the following cases: *Phil.* 1095, *Hipp.* 827, *Pho.* 1345 in the superlative βαρυποτμωτάτας.

δύσμορος is not found in Aeschylus (apart from the adverb δυσμόρως in *Sept.* 837) and, in contrast to the previous adjectives, is rare in Euripides but widespread in Sophocles. In kommoi it occurs in *Aj.* 923, *Ant.* 865, *O.C.* 1672.

πολυπονώτατος is found twice in the extant complete tragedies, *Sept.* 1000 and *Hec.* 721. It is superlative of πολύπονος, a fairly common adjective in tragedy,

frequently used as a general epithet of mortals (cf. A. *Supp.* 382-83 and *Or.* 175 πολυπόνων βροτῶν, *Or.* 977 ἐφαμέρων ἔθνη πολύπονα).

σχέτλιος is quite common in Euripides but not in Sophocles and is rare in Aeschylus. In kommoi it is found in *Andr.* 1179 ὦ σχέτλιος παθέων ἐγώ, and in similar phrases in E. *Supp.* 1074, E. *El.* 1170 (such phrases are frequent in tragedy: cf. also *Alc.* 408-9, *Hec.* 783).

πανώλεθρος, an adjective rare in Sophocles and Euripides but more common in Aeschylus, is used twice in kommoi: *Sept.* 932, *Andr.* 1225.

αἰακτός is used only by Aeschylus three times, twice with reference to a person (in *Pers.* 931 in the sense 'lamentable', in 1069 in the sense 'wailing') and once to describe πήματα (*Sept.* 846-47), in the latter combination parodied in Ar. *Ach.* 1195.

γοεδνός is another adjective found only in Aeschylus, three times in the final kommos of *Pers.* (1047, 1057=1063) and twice in *Supp.* (72, 194).

The adjectives mentioned above are often combined in an impressive accumulation to emphasize the misery of the mourner and to create a pathetic effect. So, for example, Xerxes is characterized as δύστηνος, τλήμων, αἰακτός, μέλεος (*Pers.* 909, 912, 931, 932 respectively); Philoctetes τάλας (*Phil.* 1083, 1104, 1187, 1189), μέλεος (1091, 1126), τλήμων reduplicated (1101), βαρύποτμος (1095), δύστηνος (1152); Creon τάλας (*Ant.* 1295, 1299), μέλεος (1319, 1341), δείλαιος (1272, 1310-11); Theseus τάλας (*Hipp.* 817, 822, 826, 852, 875), μέλεος (845), τλήμων (837, 880).

Interjections

Interjections are widespread in tragedy, in both iambic and lyric passages, expressing a variety of emotions: grief, fear, agitation, physical pain, joy.[36] In lamenting passages, they are used far more extensively in kommoi (none is lacking in them), in some of which they occur in greater density and accumulation than in any other passage in tragedy (as in the final kommoi of *Pers.* and *Ant.*).

In the Homeric laments interjections are rare: the only instances are *Il.* 18. 54 ὤ μοι ἐγὼ δειλή, ὤ μοι δυσαριστοτόκεια (which is also the only case of anaphoric repetition in them), *Il.* 18. 324 ὤ πόποι, which is in accordance

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[36]Koonce (1962, 77ff) lists all the different occasions in tragedy on which each interjection is employed.

with their generally calm spirit. Nevertheless, the delivery of interjections seems to have been customary in the formal dirge sung during the *prothesis*, as is made clear from a vase representation. On a black-figure *phormiskos* which depicts the *prothesis* of a female character[37] are inscribed the first words of the lament of the father, ΟΙΜΟΙ ΘΥΓΑ[ΤΗΡ], and above the surface of the column that is on the left of the bier the letters ΟΙΜΙΕΚ, as if the house mourns. As Shapiro (1991, 638) remarks, "The father's words, though part of a hexameter verse, sound like an authentic *threnos* rather than an epigram carved in stone."

If, then, interjections were characteristic of ritual lamentation, the tragedians have made full use of them in this context. I list below the most common in order of frequency in kommoi, considering the intensity of emotion they express and which of them are more appropriately delivered by the principal mourner and which by his respondent.

ἰώ, single or in fewer cases duplicated, is very frequent in invocations, followed usually by a vocative or more rarely a nominative (see pp. 93-94). As Burton (1980, 120) remarks, it is "a call for support from one in need or distress." When it is not used in this way it is often punctuated (e.g. *Pers*. 908, 1004, 1005, *Tro*. 173, E. *Supp*. 1127=1134) or also frequently followed by μοι, single or duplicated (duplication in all cases is reasonable to suggest heightened emotion), thus drawing attention to the speaker (e.g. *Pers*. 974, *Aj*. 385, 891=937, *Alc*. 862, 875=892). The addition of μοι to ἰώ gives it a strictly personal tone, so it is noticeable that it is always delivered by the main sufferer with the exception of *Tro*. 1237 where it is delivered by the chorus instead of Hecuba. However, this peculiarity can be explained by the fact that in effect they are the principal mourners exhorting Hecuba to lamentation. Similarly, in E. *Supp*. 798-837, although the chorus are the bereaved, Adrastus delivers all the interjections including the extended ἰὼ ἰώ μοί μοι (828), which shows his personal suffering for the disaster.

αἰαῖ is the next most frequent interjection in kommoi. It is often duplicated, sometimes followed by a genitive (e.g. *Pers*. 928, *Hipp*. 813, *Hel*. 211-12) or rarely by a vocative (*Sept*. 892-93), but in most cases it is punctuated. It has a more intense emotional force than ἰώ, indicative of which are the repeated cries of Amphitryon beginning with ἰώ in *Herc*. 886ff before he exclaims αἰαῖ κακῶν (899), which marks the death of the children, as the subsequent reaction of the chorus shows (900ff). So it is also used to express Electra's almost distraught situation as she insists on mourning (S. *El*. 136);

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[37]Athens, Kerameikos 691. For a discussion of it see Shapiro (1991, 636-38).

Creon's mad grief at the deaths of Haemon and Eurydice (*Ant*. 1267=1290). αἰαῖ also expresses a sudden and violent outburst of grief, so it often constitutes the first reaction of the recipients of bad news (cf. *Pers*. 257, *Herc*. 913, *Pho*. 1340), as well as of physical pain and suffering (cf. *Trach*. 1081, *Hipp*. 1370). It seems from the above that it was associated with ritual lamentation for the dead, a suggestion reinforced by its appearance in antilabic verses with close antiphony (cf. *Herc*. 1066, *Tro*. 579, 1229, *Pho*. 1560), where it is often combined with ὤμοι (*Herc*. 1065) or οἴμοι (*Tro*. 578, 1230) and the verb στενάζειν (*Herc*. 914, 1064, *Tro*. 1229) or, similarly, καταστένειν (*Pho*. 1560).

φεῦ is sometimes followed by a genitive (e.g. *I.T*. 156, *Or*. 161) and rarely by a vocative addressing the dead (*Ant*. 1300), but in most cases it is punctuated like all the other exclamations. It covers a wide range of emotional intensity. So it is used to express Electra's passionate desire for revenge (*Cho*. 396) and Hecuba's agitation in contemplating her future life as a slave (*Tro*. 190), but it can also denote a calmer state of mind as, for example, when the chorus of *Ag*. compare Cassandra's mourning with that of the nightingale (*Ag*. 1143).

οἴμοι is very frequent in Sophocles and Euripides, but rare in Aeschylus, where it is found only four times (*Ag*. 1225, *Cho*. 434, 875,[38] 876), one of which in a kommos (*Cho*. 434). It is often followed by a genitive (e.g. *Aj*. 367, *Pho*. 1345, 1346) or by the dative μοι (e.g. *Phil*. 1123, *I.T*. 155), which reinforces its personal tone. However, the force of μοι in οἴμοι is not always retained (as in ἰώ μοι), as is shown from its delivery by characters not personally affected by the disaster, e.g. the chorus in *Herc*. 1051 or the coryphaeus in *Ant*. 1270, the latter being completely detached from the suffering of the principal mourner. When οἴμοι is delivered by the sufferer it can express different degrees of emotional intensity, for example, from Antigone's violent reaction as she thinks that she is being mocked by the chorus (*Ant*. 839)[39] to Admetus' calmer state of mind as he remembers the day of his wedding (*Alc*. 914).

ὤμοι is far less frequent in tragedy than οἴμοι. It can be followed by ἐγώ (e.g. *Andr*. 1173, *Hec*. 1056) or a genitive (e.g. *Aj*. 900, 909) or ἐγώ plus a genitive (e.g. *Hipp*. 591, 817) or by μοι (e.g. *Ag*. 1494=1518, *Ant*. 1317). Unlike οἴμοι, ὤμοι always retains its personal character, thus it seems to have a stronger emotional force. In all cases of kommoi where it is employed it is

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[38]In this verse in the intensified form πανοίμοι.

[39]It is noticeable that Ajax and Philoctetes preface their thoughts of being laughed at by their enemies with the same interjection (cf. *Aj*. 367, *Phil*. 1123).

delivered by the principal mourner. Only in one case, in *Hipp*. 591, is it delivered by a character not personally involved in the disaster, the chorus, which shows exactly how much they sympathize with Phaedra. In effect, they are the main mourners, being assigned lyric verses, while she delivers trimeters.

ὀτοτοῖ is the next most frequent interjection in kommoi (not found, however, in any of the Sophoclean ones).[40] It is used sparingly in tragedy, in shorter or longer versions, occurring almost exclusively in its lyric parts, apart from one instance (*Ag*. 1257), and expressing a violent outburst of emotion, especially climactic agitation, as is depicted in its lengthened forms. So, for example, in *Pers*. 268=274 it marks the agitation of the Persian elders as they contemplate the extent of the catastrophe; in *Ag*. 1072 the breaking of Cassandra's long silence; in *Andr*. 1197, 1200 the beginning of the antiphonal dirge between Peleus and the chorus.

ἔ ἔ is found exclusively in lyrics, in different forms (cf. also ἐἔ ἐἔ in *Pers*. 977, ἔ ἔ in *P.V*. 566), as there is no agreement in the manuscript tradition about its accentuation and its single or double repetition. It is used to express sharp agitation caused by a sudden stimulus, physical or mental. So Xerxes utters this cry in *Pers*. 977 recalling vividly the violent death of his comrades; Electra in S. *El*. 840 reminded by the previous words of the chorus (ὑπὸ γαίας) that Agamemnon and Orestes are dead.

οἰοῖ is a rare exclamation found only in the Aeschylean lyrics, in this form (*Pers*. 931, *Supp*. 885, *Eum*. 841=874) or in lengthened versions (*Pers*. 955=966, 1067, *Supp*. 876), and expresses a violent emotional situation. So, for example, in *Pers*. 955=966 the chorus raise this cry in agitation before they start listing the names of the Persian leaders.

παπαῖ (with lengthened versions in *Phil*. 746, 754) is used sparingly in tragedy to express strong physical or mental suffering to the point of distraction. So in *Pers*. 1031 the chorus utter this cry on hearing that Xerxes tore his robes; in *Ag*. 1114 it underlines Cassandra's derangement at her vision of the net of Hades.

πόποι (with the forms ποποῖ in *Pers*. 550=560 and πόπαξ in *Eum*. 143)[41] is not common in tragedy (no occurrences in Euripides), found almost exclusively in lyric passages apart from *Pers*. 731. Its occurrences in kommoi, Cassandra's cries in *Ag*. 1072=1076, 1100 as she is overwhelmed by her

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[40]In fact, in Sophocles it is used only in *El*. 1245, and in the form τοτοτοῖ in *Trach*. 1010.

[41]As Sommerstein (1989, on 143) remarks, interjections in -άξ are common in comedy but none occurs in serious poetry except here.

visions, and Orestes' in *Cho.* 405 being in a position of despair, must include a note of frenzy.[42]

δᾶ is an exclamation of horror[43] following πόποι in *Ag.* 1072=1076 and *Cho.* 405. In tragedy it is always found in combination with other interjections (cf. also *Eum.* 841=874, *Pho.* 1296).

οἴ followed by ᾽γώ or ἐγώ is found only in Aeschylus and Euripides, in most cases in spoken parts and always delivered by women.[44] In the uncombined form οἴ it occurs only in the lyrics of *Pers.* (663=671, 1003, 1045[45]=1053) and possibly in *P.V.* 602 (where, however, some mss give οἴ). The fact that it is delivered by men only in *Pers.*, whereas in all other cases by women, may point to the femininity of the Persians (see p. 162). As is also shown from its occurrences in *Pers.*, it expresses a sharp emotional state in contrast to the combination οἰ ᾽γώ, which usually denotes calmer grief.

ὦ is a rare exclamation found always in lyrics with the exception of *Ag.* 1214 (an iambic dimeter preceding Cassandra's monologue in trimeters). In *Pers.* 985 it is followed by a genitive, in *Aj.* 372 by a nominative, which, according to Jebb (1896, on 372ff.), is stronger than ὦ with vocative. As Sommerstein (1989, on 357) remarks, its occurrence in mid-sentence (or at the end of a short sentence), normally expresses a strong access of emotion (cf. *Hipp.* 362, E. *Supp.* 807).

ἰή is found only in the Aeschylean lyrics, always in contexts of lamentation, single in *Ag.* 1485 and duplicated in *Pers.* 1004 and *Supp.* 115.

ἠέ is also rare, found only in the Aeschylean lyrics. In *Sept.* 966=978 it marks antiphonal exchanges at the beginning of strophe and antistrophe. Its other occurrences are *Pers.* 569=577, 651=656, *Supp.* 831.

ἰωά and ἠή, the latter duplicated, are found only in the epode of the final kommos of *Pers.* (1071, 1072 and 1075, 1076 respectively).

Two or more interjections are frequently combined in an extended exclamatory phrase (e.g. *Pers.* 1004 ἰὴ ἰὴ ἰὼ ἰώ, *Ag.* 1072 ὀτοτοτοτοῖ πόποι

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[42]Cf. Bowen (1986, on 405). Similarly in *P.V.* 576 and *Eum.* 145 (see Sommerstein 1989, on 145), but in its other instances (*Pers.* 731, 852, *O.T.* 168, *Trach.* 853, in all of them preceded by ὦ) it denotes a calmer state of mind.

[43]See Denniston-Page (1957, on 1072).

[44]In some cases this interjection is delivered repeatedly throughout the play by the same female character, for example, Clytemnestra in *Cho.* 691, 887, 893, 928, Hecuba in *Hec.* 154, 438, 676, Helen in *Hel.* 594, 685, 1223.

[45]Here, however, the mss give οἴμοι.

δᾶ, *Eum.* 841 οἰοῖ δᾶ φεῦ) and, as has already been shown *passim*, they are very often found in strophic responsion. Collard (1975, II. on 805-7) remarks that "φεῦ φεῦ and ἰὼ ἰώ are the only interjections which *when syntactically isolated* respond (very rarely) with ordinary words", thus in E. *Supp.* 805 ἰὼ ἰώ=818 ἔχεις ἔχεις. In cases of close antiphony they are usually taken up by the particle δῆτα (cf. *Pers.* 1072, S. *El.* 844, *Herc.* 900, *Tro.* 584, 1231), so that the second singer reinforces the cry of the first. The use of this particle in antiphony is parodied in Ar. *Lys.* 972 where it picks up an adjective.

In most cases interjections occur at the beginning of a verse, sometimes also marking the beginning of a stanza. Frequently also a character in distress starts his lament with an interjection, as, for example, Xerxes in *Pers.* 908, Ajax in *Aj.* 348, Oedipus in *O.T.* 1307, Creon in *Ant.* 1261, Admetus in *Alc.* 861. In all these cases the beginning of lamentation coincides with the entrance of the sufferer at a critical moment of the action. So in *Pers.* this is Xerxes' only appearance in the play, long postponed; in *Aj.* it is Ajax's first appearance after he has regained his senses; Oedipus in *O.T.* appears after his self-blinding presenting a horrible sight; Creon in *Ant.* enters carrying Haemon's body in his arms; Admetus in *Alc.* returns from Alcestis' funeral.

The distribution of interjections between the participants of a kommos is usually indicative of the relationship between them. So, for example, the sharing of interjections in the final kommos of *Pers.* and the parodos of *Tro.* reflects the equal suffering of the participants and their unanimous lamentation. By contrast, in *Ag.* 1448-1576 and *Eum.* 778-891 all the interjections are delivered by the chorus, who are in both cases the sufferers, none by Clytemnestra and Athena respectively. On the other hand, in *Alc.* 861-934 the chorus do not utter any interjections in contrast to the actor, which indicates that they do not participate in his lamentation. Noticeably, this is the case in most of the Sophoclean kommoi. Exceptionally, in *Aj.* 201-262 and 891-973 the shared anxiety of the chorus and Tecmessa finds expression in the equal distribution of interjections between them.

A great number of interjections in a passage is obviously indicative of great agitation, so it is reasonably found in kommoi reacting to a recent disaster (e.g. *Pers.* 908ff, *Eum.* 778ff, *Aj.* 891ff, S. *El.* 823ff, *Alc.* 861ff). By contrast, they are sparingly used in kommoi lacking the agitation of those mentioned above, e.g. the ones concerning Agamemnon's death which happened long ago (*Cho.* 306ff, S. *El.* 121ff, E. *El.* 167ff). Interjections may be scattered throughout a kommos or they may be accumulated in a specific part of it. In kommoi which fall into two parts they are usually accumulated in the

second one which denotes greater agitation (cf. *Pers*. 1002ff, *Sept*. 961ff, *Tro*. 1302ff). In other kommoi which involve antilabic verses with close antiphony they are naturally concentrated in those verses (cf. *Supp*. 805-7, *Tro*. 1226-31, *Herc*. 1065-66). The distribution of interjections may also serve the requirements of a specific kommos; for example, it is noticeable that in *O.T*. 1307ff all of them occur in the first strophic pair where Oedipus laments for his blindness, but none in the second one where he explains his motives; in *Alc*. 861ff the majority of Admetus' interjections are found in the first strophic pair, interrupting the consolatory statements of the chorus, thus indicating his unwillingness to accept the comfort they offer him.

Invocations

Lamenting language is rich in invocations, frequently interjected with ὦ or ἰώ, which are suitable to express heightened emotion, physical pain and suffering of any kind. I cite below the most frequent types found in kommoi.

Invocations of natural surroundings and elements of nature are frequent in the Sophoclean plays, used in the moments of the greatest isolation and despair of the hero when he can appeal neither to men nor to gods (cf. *Phil*. 938 οὐ γὰρ ἄλλον οἶδ' ὅτῳ λέγω). The landscape/natural elements are the only ones who can listen to his lament or complaint and not betray him. In kommoi such invocations are found in *Aj*. 394-95 ἰὼ σκότος...ἔρεβος ὦ φαεννότατον, 412-13 ἰὼ πόροι ἁλίρροθοι πάραλά τ' ἄντρα καὶ νέμος ἐπάκτιον, 418-19 ὦ Σκαμάνδριοι γείτονες ῥοαί, *Ant*. 844-45, *Phil*. 1081, 1087.[46]

In moments of great despair one also turns to one's city: ἰὼ Σκαμάνδρου πάτριον ποτόν (*Ag*. 1157), ὦ πόλις (e.g. *Ant*. 842, *Phil*. 1213, *Andr*. 1211, E. *Supp*. 808). Frequent are also addresses to a city/land which is destroyed (e.g. *Pers*. 1070=1074 ἰὼ ἰὼ Περσὶς αἶα δύσβατος, *Tro*. 173 Τροία Τροία δύσταν', *Hel*. 362 ἰὼ τάλαινα Τροία) and, similarly, to one's house

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[46]This sort of address to the landscape is a technique developed exclusively by Sophocles. As Knox (1964, 170, n. 23) remarks, the first example of such an address in Greek literature seems to be *P.V*. 88ff, which, in addition to all the other disputed matters about this play, makes it even more problematical.

when it is afflicted by misfortune (e.g. *Alc.* 912 ὦ σχῆμα δόμων, *Herc.* 891 ἰὼ δόμοι, *Pho.* 1342 ὦ δώματ'...Οἰδίπου τάδε).

Very common are also invocations of a situation, event or person that is the cause of present suffering or the object of hatred, sorrow or a similar emotion. Examples from kommoi include: *Ag.* 1146 ἰὼ ἰώ...βίος, 1156 ἰὼ γάμοι..., 1455 ἰὼ παράνους Ἑλένα, *Aj.* 379-80 ἰώ...τέκνον Λαρτίου, *Ant.* 863-65 ἰώ...ἅται κοιμήματά τ'..., 1284 ἰὼ δυσκάθαρτος Ἄιδου λιμήν, *Alc.* 895 ὦ μακρὰ πένθη λῦπαί τε φίλων, *Andr.* 1186 ὦ γάμος..., *Hel.* 335 ἰὼ μέλεος ἀμέρα.

Invocations of gods and semi-divine beings, either collectively or individually, are very common when one points to one's misery (cf. *Tro.* 1288-90, *Med.* 160-61, *Andr.* 1224-25) or when one is in despair (cf. *Cho.* 408-9, *Eum.* 785, *Aj.* 387, *O.C.* 1748-49), and are often accompanied by a wish (cf. *Pers.* 915ff, E. *El.* 135ff, *Hec.* 1066ff) or are delivered in a reproachful tone (*Eum.* 778ff, E. *El.* 1190ff, *Herc.* 1087ff, *Tro.* 1288ff). Addresses to the dead are also extremely frequent in kommoi (see pp. 111ff).

Imperatives

Characteristic of ritual laments where one participant acts as *exarchos* instructing the other what to do is the employment of imperatives. The longest such passage is found in *Pers.* 1038-1077 where almost all of Xerxes' utterances (apart from 1071[47] and 1075-76) contain imperatives with which he directs the movement of the chorus (1038 ἴθι, 1069 κίε), asks them to weep (1038 δίαινε, 1046 στέναζε, 1065 διαίνου), to deliver shrill cries (1042 ἴυζε μέλος, 1050 ἐπορθίαζε γόοις, 1054 κἀπιβόα τὸ Μύσιον, 1058 ἀύτει δ' ὀξύ, 1073 γοᾶσθ') replying antiphonally to his own (1040=1048, 1066 βόα νυν ἀντίδουπά μοι), and to perform demonstrative gestures (1046 ἔρεσσε, 1054 στέρν' ἄρασσε, 1056 γενείου πέρθε...τρίχα, 1060 πέπλον δ' ἔρεικε, 1062 ψάλλ' ἔθειραν). In this kommos all the exhortations of the *exarchos* occur in its final part with the exception of one at its beginning (941-42 ἴετ'...αὐδάν). In E. *Supp.* 800-1 Adrastus begins his exchange with the mothers by exhorting them to reply antiphonally to his cries (ἀπύσατ' ἀντίφων' ἐμῶν στεναγμάτων). In *Herc.* 1064 and *Tro.* 1229 the chorus prompt their brief antiphonal exchanges with

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[47]However, as Broadhead (1960, on 1066-76) remarks, it is reasonable to assume that this line (according to his text, 1070) also represents a command, which is acted out by the chorus in the following line.

Amphitryon and Hecuba respectively with the imperative στέναζε. The chorus also often exhort themselves to deliver cries of mourning or perform gestures of grief. This may function as an introduction to their lamentation (cf. *Sept.* 854ff γόων...ἐρέσσετ' ἀμφὶ κρατί...πίτυλον) or constitute their immediate reaction to disastrous news just reported (cf. *Pers.* 257 διαίνεσθε, 280-81 ἴυζε...βοάν, *Pho.* 1350 ἀνάγετε κωκυτόν) or mark renewed agitation (cf. *Pers.* 955 οἰοιοῖ βόα, *Tro.* 1235 ἄρασσε κρᾶτα).[48]

In the extant tragedies of Sophocles there are no cases of imperatives concerning lamenting cries or gestures of mourning, since this ritual element is missing from his kommoi. By contrast, characteristic of them are the repeated imperatives and prohibitions of the chorus to the actor to be moderate, not to mourn excessively and generally to follow their advice (e.g. *Aj.* 371 ὕπεικε καὶ φρόνησον εὖ,[49] *El.* 177 μήθ'...ὑπεράχθεο, 213 φράζου μὴ πόρσω φωνεῖν, *Phil.* 1182 μετρίαζε, *O.C.* 1722 λήγετε τοῦδ' ἄχους), which indicate that the role of the chorus is not to join in the lamentation of the hero but to reject his attitude and advise a different one to the present circumstances.

The mourner often calls attention to his suffering by employing imperatives such as ἴδεσθε or ὁρᾶτε or an equivalent phrase. They may be addressed to the chorus (e.g. *P.V.* 141, *Aj.* 351, *Ant.* 806) or to one's city (E. *Supp.* 808), thus inviting the pity of his fellow-men, or to the gods (e.g. *Cho.* 406-7, E. *El.* 1178, *Tro.* 1290, *Med.* 161). By directing attention to themselves in this way the heroes, in the context of the dramatic performance, invite the attention of the wider audience of the theatre.

Phrases showing the impact of a recent misfortune - Ornate language

In tragic laments for recent deaths the bereaved express their violent grief at the loss of their beloved person in a way unparalleled in the Homeric laments. They feel that they have been completely destroyed, an emotion they frequently express with the verbs ὄλλυμαι, οἴχομαι and similar ones. So

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[48]In Euripides, unlike the other tragedians, actors also address themselves with imperatives, sometimes concerning ritual lamentation, as in E. *El.* 125-26, 150, *Tro.* 279-80. For this form of self-exhortation, which is less natural than those a group of people address to one another, see Kaimio (1970, 125, 133-34).

[49]In *Aj.* 368 μή...αὔδα τάδε Tecmessa as well sides with the chorus.

Tecmessa's first reaction to Ajax's death is οἴχωκ', ὄλωλα, διαπεπόρθημαι (*Aj.* 896), which is complemented by the chorus as ὤμοι, κατέπεφνες, ἄναξ, τόνδε συνναύταν (*Aj.* 901-2); Theseus in *Hipp.* states that with her death Phaedra has destroyed him (cf. 839 ἀπώλεσας γὰρ μᾶλλον ἢ κατέφθισο,[50] 846 ἀλλ' ἀπωλόμην).[51] A vivid expression indicating the effect of a death on the bereaved is found in *O.C.* 1683-84 νῷν δ' ὀλεθρία νὺξ ἐπ' ὄμμασιν βέβακε, where Antigone describes her and Ismene's grief in terms of actual death.[52] Similar expressions are also used to describe the effect of a recent misfortune other than death on the sufferers, as, for example, in *Hipp.* 565, 575, 878. The frequent use of ὄλλυμαι by Euripides in similar contexts is parodied by Aristophanes in *Thesm.* 209 where he presents him exclaiming ὦ τρισκακοδαίμων, ὡς ἀπόλωλ'.[53]

The bereaved also frequently express their utter desolation and loneliness with the use of the adjective ἔρημος/ἐρῆμος or similar ones. The death they mourn for means an irreplaceable loss for them, which they emphasize. So after Alcestis' funeral Admetus realizes how empty his house is without her, and stresses it at the beginning and end of his kommos (*Alc.* 861 χήρων μελάθρων, 925 λέκτρων κοίτας ἐς ἐρήμους); Peleus stresses his childlessness for a second time after the loss of Neoptolemus (*Andr.* 1205-7 ὦ φίλος, δόμον ἔλιπες ἔρημον,...γέροντ' ἄπαιδα νοσφίσας, 1216 ἄτεκνος ἔρημος).[54] Similar expressions are lacking in the Aeschylean kommoi, naturally enough since in all cases where a recent death is lamented the mourners are not close kin of the dead.

The agitation at the news of a recent death or another misfortune is often marked with exclamatory phrases pointing to its effect on the sufferers. Here are some of them: *Eum.* 837=870 ἐμὲ παθεῖν τάδε, *Aj.* 900 ὤμοι ἐμῶν νόστων, *Hipp.* 845 μέλεος, οἷον εἶδον ἄλγος δόμων, *Andr.* 1173 ὤμοι ἐγώ, κακὸν οἷον ὁρῶ τόδε, *Pho.* 1345-46 οἴμοι ξυμφορᾶς βαρυποτμωτάτας, οἴμοι κακῶν δύστηνος, ὦ τάλας ἐγώ.

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[50]Similar phrases are frequently delivered by the mourners, e.g. S. *El.* 808, 1163-64, *Ant.* 871, *Alc.* 1082.

[51]Cf., similarly, *Ant.* 1285, 1288, *Andr.* 1176-77, *Hec.* 683, E. *Supp.* 1073, 1158, *I.T.* 153.

[52]The image of darkness covering one's eyes while dying is common in Homer (e.g. *Il.* 5. 310). A picture similar to *O.C.* 1683-84 is given of Achilles when he is informed of Patroclus' death (*Il.* 18. 22) and of Andromache when she sees Hector being dragged behind Achilles' chariot (*Il.* 22. 466).

[53]For other cases of Aristophanic parody of this verb see p. 139, n. 8.

[54]For similar expressions cf. *O.C.* 1717, 1735, *Hipp.* 847, E. *Supp.* 1131-32.

The agitation exhibited in phrases such as those mentioned above indicates that the mourner is preoccupied with the immediate and particular disaster, so there is little room for contemplation beyond that or the use of more elaborate language. When the kommos consists of short exchanges between the participants, the lack of ornate language is more natural, but even in cases such as *Eum.* 778ff, *Ant.* 1261ff, *Hipp.* 817ff, *Andr.* 1173ff (its first part), where the mourner delivers long utterances, the language is mainly exclamatory with broken sentences and frequent repetitions of words and phrases, indicative of great agitation, which normally excludes the use of extensive metaphors or other images.

These are usually found in kommoi where the tension is lower, for example, in the first strophic pair of the parodos of *Hel.* which defines the lamenting mood; in *Ant.* 823ff, the comparison Antigone draws between her fate and Niobe's; in *Phil.* 1123ff where the hero in a long digression imagines Odysseus playing with his bow. The lack of urgency in the situation depicted in the parodoi of *Hel.* and *I.T.* allows also for an extensive contemplation by the heroines of their past sufferings with vivid imagery (*Hel.* 229ff, *I.T.* 203ff). Similarly, the calmer exchanges between Electra and the chorus in the parodoi of S. and E. *El.* give the heroine the chance to exhibit her suffering in elaborate (cf. E. *El.* 175ff) and reflective language (cf. S. *El.* 147ff). All these utterances are close to monodic ones, hence their language is reminiscent of that of monodies proper (e.g. *Tro.* 122ff, *Ion* 881ff).

The contrast between ornate and unadorned language in the same kommos is brilliantly brought out in the two distinct parts of the final kommoi of *Pers.* and *Sept.* The elaborate description of their mourning character and of the disaster with the employment of vivid imagery in the first part gives way in the second one to interrupted sentences consisting in *Pers.* mainly of Xerxes' exhortations to the chorus and their responses and in *Sept.* of brief comments on the misfortune of the brothers.

7. STYLE

Verbal repetition of any kind, delivered either by the same person (anadiplōsis, anaphora, polyptoton, other forms of repetition) or shared by different persons (in cases of antiphony) is characteristic of lamenting language.

Anadiplosis

Anadiplosis is generally used to denote any strong emotion, thus is reasonably frequent in lamenting passages, where it is used especially to exhibit great agitation.[1] So in the first part of the kommos of *Pers.* (931-1001) there are comparatively few instances (8) in relation to their dense concentration in its second part (20). Similarly, there are no instances in *Ant.* 806-82 but in 1261-1347 no fewer than 13 of them are employed to indicate Creon's agitation. Euripides uses anadiplosis far more extensively than the other two tragedians in his lyrics (in fact, it is the most widespread figure in them), and consequently in his kommoi. Also unlike them, its use in Euripides frequently carries little or no emotional weight (e.g. *I.T.* 138 ἄγαγες ἄγαγες, *Hel.* 195 ἔμολεν ἔμολε).[2]

Anadiplosis can be found in any part of the verse but in most cases it occurs at its beginning. The words most often repeated in kommoi are the interjections. Following after them are the verbs, with particular preference for imperatives, especially those referring to ritual lamentation (cf. *Pers.* 1038 =1046, E. *Supp.* 800, *Tro.* 1235, *Pho.* 1350). Frequent are also the aorists of the verbs λείπω (*Pers.* 985, *Hipp.* 848) and, confined to the Euripidean kommoi, of βλώσκω (*Hipp.* 586-87, *El.* 169, *Hel.* 195) and ὄλλυμι (*Andr.* 1187, *Hel.* 384, *I.T.* 153, *Or.* 200). Quite often the anadiplosis of a verb consists of a compound and the verb in its simple form, e.g. *Ant.* 1321 ἀπάγετέ μ'...ἄγετέ μ' (according to Pearson's text, 1924), E. *Supp.* 811 προσάγετ' <ἄγετε>.

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[1] Cf. the scholiast on *Hec.* 909 δορὶ δὴ δορί: διπλασιάζει ἕνεκεν τῆς λύπης.

[2] For the use of this figure by Euripides and the differences with Aeschylus and Sophocles see Breitenbach (1934, 214ff).

In most cases of anadiplosis one word is repeated and in fewer instances two (e.g. *Aj.* 359 σέ τοι σέ τοι, *Andr.* 1186 ὦ γάμος ὦ γάμος) or even three words (cf. *Hipp.* 836 τὸ κατὰ γᾶς θέλω, τὸ κατὰ γᾶς κνέφας). Sometimes there are also two successive anadiploses indicating greater pathos (e.g. *Pers.* 1010 νέᾳ νέᾳ δύᾳ δύᾳ, *Phil.* 1186-87 αἰαῖ αἰαῖ, δαίμων δαίμων, *Tro.* 1312 ἰὼ ἰώ, Πρίαμε Πρίαμε) while often one or more words are inserted between those repeated (e.g. *Aj.* 396-97 ἔλεσθ' ἔλεσθέ μ' οἰκήτορα, ἔλεσθέ μ', *Ant.* 1319-20 ἐγὼ γάρ σ', ἐγώ σ' ἔκανον, ὦ μέλεος, ἐγώ, *I.T.* 148 ἆταί μοι συμβαίνουσ' ἆται). The latter type of anadiplosis seems to express greater agitation, almost distraction; it is noticeable that in Creon's agitated kommos in *Ant.* 1261-1347 there are six such cases (in verses 1273, 1285, 1296, 1319-20, 1321, 1340-41). Anadiplosis is often found in strophic responsion as well, e.g. *Ag.* 1156 ἰὼ γάμοι γάμοι=1167 ἰὼ πόνοι πόνοι, *Cho.* 382 Ζεῦ Ζεῦ=396 φεῦ φεῦ, *Hel.* 195 ἔμολεν ἔμολε=214 ἔλαχεν ἔλαχεν. In the above cases of *Cho.* and *Hel.* where different participants deliver strophe and antistrophe, the responsion of the repetition suggests antiphony between them.

Anadiplosis is not so frequent in the Aeschylean lyrics outside kommoi as it is in those of Sophocles and, to a much greater extent, of Euripides. Noticeable, however, is its use in other ritual passages in Aeschylus and Euripides, i.e. *Pers.* 650=655, 657, 672, 680 (invocation of Darius), *Cho.* 157 (invocation of Agamemnon), *Bacch.* 68, 116, 152-53 (cultic hymn to Dionysus), *Ion* 125-26=141-42 (hymn to Apollo). It seems, therefore, that it was a characteristic feature of ritual passages in general, and consequently of laments for the dead. The great number of occurrences in the exodos of *Pers.* is perhaps sufficient evidence of that. Indicative is also the beginning of the mourning utterance of the Trojan seers (*Ag.* 408 ἀνέστενον) when Helen arrives in Troy, reported in *Ag.* 410 "ἰὼ ἰὼ δῶμα δῶμα". Procne, the archetype of mourning, always cries 'Itys' twice (cf. *Ag.* 1144, S. *El.* 148, *Phaeth.* 70).[3] Anadiplosis was, then, naturally used by the tragedians in their laments and in any other passages denoting strong emotion.

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[3]See Diggle (1970, on 70): "The sense is not 'mourning Itys Itys' but rather 'mourning *Itys Itys*'".

Repetition of phrases

Apart from the repetition of individual words, in the Aeschylean kommoi there are occurrences of whole phrases or even passages (ephymnia) repeated, all of them within a ritual context: *Pers*. 1040=1048~1066, 1057=1063, 1055=1061, 1070~1074 (ritual lament for the Persian dead), *Sept*. 975-77=986-88 (similarly, lament for Eteocles and Polyneices), *Ag*. 1072-73=1076-77, 1080-81=1085-86 (Cassandra invoking Apollo as his priestess), 1489-96=1513-20 (the chorus' dirge for Agamemnon). Such repetitions can be better understood within the prominent ritual context of the Aeschylean lyrics in general,[4] where similar examples are abundant: *Pers*. 663=671, *Supp*. 117-121=129-132, 141-43=151-53, 162-66=<inserted>, 889-92=899-902, *Ag*. 121=139~159, *Eum*. 328-33=341-46, 1043=1047.[5] Similar cases are lacking in the Sophoclean and Euripidean kommoi, but there are some examples in other Euripidean lyrics, i.e. E. *El*. 112-14=127-29 (in a lamenting context as well), *Tro*. 314, 331 (also 310, 322), *Ion* 125-27=141-43, although nothing comparable in Sophocles, which is an indication that the ritual element found in the lyrics of the other two tragedians is missing from his.

Anaphora

Like anadiplosis, anaphora is a frequent figure of speech in the tragic lyrics, used far more extensively by Euripides than by the other two tragedians. Its use in kommoi is also widespread. Its usual form is the repetition of a word at the beginning of two successive phrases but there are many examples of a tripartite anaphora as well, e.g. S. *El*. 201-4 ὦ πασᾶν κείνα πλέον ἀμέρα...ὦ νύξ, ὦ...ἔκπαγλ' ἄχθη, *I.T*. 232 ἔτι βρέφος, ἔτι νέον, ἔτι θάλος. Frequent is also the successive repetition of two words, e.g. *Aj*. 911 ὁ πάντα κωφός, ὁ πάντ' ἄιδρις, *I.T*. 203-5 ἐξ ἀρχᾶς μοι δυσδαίμων

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[4]For the ritual forms underlying a considerable number of the Aeschylean lyrics see Else (1977). For the prominent cultic element in them see also Kranz (1933, 127ff).

[5]As Johansen - Whittle (1980, II. on 117-22=128-33) remark, it is characteristic of the Aeschylean ephymnia that they denote a high level of pathos. Moritz (1979) shows in addition that, whatever their immediate ritual context, their themes are widely applicable to the play as a whole. The frequent use of ephymnia and the repetition of other phrases in Aeschylus are parodied in Ar. *Frogs* 1264-77.

δαίμων...ἐξ ἀρχᾶς..., while there is also the case of two successive anaphoras: *Alc.* 863 ποῖ βῶ; ποῖ στῶ; τί λέγω; τί δὲ μή;. This figure can be also found in strophic responsion, as in *Cho.* 431-32 ἄνευ πολιτᾶν ἄνακτ' ἄνευ δὲ πενθημάτων=436-37 ἕκατι μὲν δαιμόνων, ἕκατι δ' ἀμᾶν χερῶν, where it emphasizes the symmetry of the antiphonal utterances of Electra and Orestes respectively. The words repeated in anaphora do not always present the same form, e.g. E. *Supp.* 832-33 πικροὺς ἐσεῖδες γάμους, πικρὰν δὲ Φοίβου φάτιν, *Hel.* 198-99 δι' ἐμὲ τὰν πολυκτόνον, δι' ἐμὸν ὄνομα πολύπονον. The words most often used in anaphoric repetition in kommoi are pronouns, with particular preference for the interrogative τίς, and then interjections and adjectives follow.

Anaphora can be complementary to anadiplosis, that is, kommoi with a great number of anadiploses may be poor in anaphoric repetitions or *vice versa*, or only one of these figures may be used or both of them may have roughly an equal share in the kommos. So, for example, the dense concentration of anadiploses in the final kommoi of *Pers.* and *Ant.* is complemented by few anaphoric repetitions in each case: *Pers.* 950-51, 956-57, 966-68, 978-79 (all of them, interestingly, in the first part of the kommos), *Ant.* 1272-74, 1289, 1328-1333. Conversely, in the parodos of S. *El.* anadiploses are sparingly used whereas anaphoras are more frequent, so that the joint lamentation of the chorus and Electra for Agamemnon (193-212) is expressed exclusively through anaphoric repetitions (cf. 193-94, 199, 201-4, 207-8). In the exodos of *Tro.* the lamenting mood is reflected exclusively in the use of anadiploses while in E. *Supp.* 1123-64 the number of instances of each figure is almost equal (cf. 1123=1131, 1127=1134 for anadiploses, and 1134-35, 1138-39, 1147-48 for anaphoras). In most instances in kommoi anaphora is used to denote agitation but quite often it is used in a calmer tone simply to achieve verbal symmetry, as in *Sept.* 901, 904-5, 911-12, 941-45. It is also frequently used in other lyrics for this purpose (with particular prominence in those with ritual content), often in combination with isometric cola, rhyme and assonance (see pp. 109-110).

Polyptoton

The repetition of a word with different inflection (polyptoton) naturally emphasizes a notion and is exploited for the pathetic effect it can

have, especially by Euripides and to a smaller degree by the other two tragedians. Frequent in the Euripidean laments is the polyptoton of words with a certain emotional weight (in most cases with a cumulative effect), to an extent not found in Aeschylus or Sophocles, e.g. *I.T.* 191 μόχθος δ' ἐκ μόχθων, 197 φόνος ἐπὶ φόνῳ ἄχεα ἄχεσιν, *Hel.* 173 πάθεσι πάθεα, μέλεσι μέλεα. Unlike Euripides, in the Sophoclean laments polyptoton is confined to kommoi, which is also the case in Aeschylus (I have found only one other instance in his laments outside kommoi, *Cho.* 152-53 ὀλόμενον ὀλομένῳ). It can have a pathetic effect as in *Pers.* 1041 δόσιν κακὰν κακῶν κακοῖς[6] and *Ant.* 1266 νέος νέῳ ξὺν μόρῳ, but it is also used for other effects, for example, in *Cho.* 309-10 ἐχθρᾶς γλώσσης ἐχθρὰ γλῶσσα, 312-13 πληγῆς φονίας πληγὴν φονίαν it is used to intensify the notion of retributive justice.

In all the above cases polyptoton consists mainly of nouns or adjectives, repeated either successively or, in fewer instances, interrupted by other words. Breitenbach (1934, 224) talks about a 'verbal paregmenon' as well, e.g. E. *El.* 1203 φρονεῖς γὰρ ὅσια νῦν, τότ' οὐ φρονοῦσα, *Herc.* 914 στενάζεθ' ὡς στενακτά, with more or less similar effects. Polyptoton is often combined with anadiploses and anaphoras, a combination obviously indicative of heightened emotion. So, for example, S. *El.* 198 δεινὰν δεινῶς is preceded and followed by a number of anaphoras; the double polyptoton in *Hec.* 690 ἕτερα δ' ἀφ' ἑτέρων κακὰ κακῶν is preceded by two anadiploses. It is probable that polyptoton, like anadiplosis and anaphora, has its origins in ritual, as is suggested by the beginning of the hymn to Zeus in A. *Supp.* 524-26 ἄναξ ἀνάκτων, μακάρων μακάρτατε καὶ τελέων τελειότατον κράτος. Also, it may not be accidental that all three figures are repeatedly used in magic spells and incantations (examples abound in Preisendanz 1973-74).

Repetition of prefix

The repetition of prefix in successive words is frequently used in kommoi, being suitable for the creation of pathos, especially since it is usually delivered by the sufferer. It is noticeable that of other lamenting passages it is confined mainly to kommoi. The most usual prefix for adjectives is α privative, found in a row of two (e.g. S. *El.* 164-65 ἄτεκνος...ἀνύμφευτος, *Alc.*

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[6]In the use of this polyptoton Kranz (1933, 134) sees the employment of the sacred number three, characteristic of cultic language.

882 ἀγάμους ἀτέκνους), three (*Tro.* 1313-14 ἄταφος ἄφιλος...ἄιστος, *Ant.* 876-77 ἄκλαυτος, ἄφιλος, ἀνυμέναιος) or even four (*I.T.* 220 ἄγαμος ἄτεκνος ἄπολις ἄφιλος). Less usual are other prefixes such as παν- (*Ag.* 1486 παναιτίου πανεργέτα, S. *El.* 851 πανσύρτῳ παμμήνῳ), δυσ- (*Aj.* 913-14 δυστράπελος δυσώνυμος) and ξυν- (*Ag.* 1116 ἡ ξύνευνος, ἡ ξυναιτία). The same prefix in the adjectives μελεοπόνος - μελεοπαθής in *Sept.* 963 emphasizes the antiphonal utterances of the two participants. A succession of verbs with the same prefix is not so common as that of adjectives (cf. *Ag.* 1553 κάππεσε κάτθανε, καὶ καταθάψομεν, *Hipp.* 823-24 ἐκνεῦσαι...ἐκπερᾶσαι). In *Ant.* 1272-74 we find the repeated tmesis ἐν...ἔπαισεν, ἐν...ἔσεισεν, which seems to be characteristic of great distress and agitation (cf., similarly, the interrupted anadiploses in this kommos).[7] There are also cases of different parts of speech with the same prefix close to one another, so that a certain effect is achieved. For example, in S. *El.* 176-77 τὸν ὑπεραλγῆ χόλον...ὑπεράχθεο the repeated use of ὑπέρ by the chorus stresses Electra's excessive behaviour (cf. also 217 ὑπερεκτήσω).

Other repetitions

Apart from the various types of repetition mentioned so far, noticeable in kommoi is the employment by the same person of similar words and phrases close to one another, which shows his preoccupation with a certain notion/idea. I give some representative examples below, on which I will comment in detail in the analysis of individual plays: *Pers.* 963 ἐπ' ἀκταῖς, 965 ἐπ' ἀκτᾶς (Xerxes is preoccupied with the death of the Persians on the Salaminian shores); *Cho.* 430 πάντολμε, 433 ἔτλας (Electra emphasizes Clytemnestra's audacity); *Aj.* 349 μόνοι, 350 μόνοι, 359 μόνον (Ajax stresses that the Salaminian sailors are his only friends); S. *El.* 221 δείν' ἐν δεινοῖς, 223 ἀλλ' ἐν γὰρ δεινοῖς (Electra points to the compulsion of her mourning); *Ant.* 852 μέτοικος, 868 μέτοικος (Antigone mourns for her ambivalent status between living and dead); *Tro.* 1319 πεσεῖσθ' ἀνώνυμοι, 1322 ἀφανὲς εἶσιν (the chorus comment on the fate that awaits Troy). Similar repetitions are not as prominent in other lyrics as in kommoi, except, interestingly, in some

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[7] Tmesis is often used in passages describing lamentation and ritual gestures (e.g. E. *Supp.* 826 κατά...ἠλοκίσμεθα, 826-27 ἀμφί...κεχύμεθα, *Herc.* 1045 κατά...στένω, E. *El.* 146-47 κατά... τεμνομένα, 148-49 ἔπι...τιθεμένα) or passionate wishes (e.g. *Pers.* 917 κατά...καλύψαι, E. *Supp.* 829 κατά...ἕλοι, 830 διά...σπάσαι), probably for the agitated, distracted effect it has.

choral odes with lamenting character. As representative examples may be cited: *P.V.* 397 στένω, 407 στονόεν, 409 στένουσι, 413 μεγαλοστόνοισι, 432 στένει, 435 στένουσιν (emphasis on the notion that the whole world mourns for Prometheus' suffering); E. *Supp.* 44 φθιμένων, 51 φθιμένους, 59 φθιμένων (the mind of the mothers is occupied completely with the thought of their dead children).

Redundancy

Another form of repetitive expression frequent in kommoi is redundancy, that is, the employment of words or phrases of a similar or the same meaning, usually in the form of synonyms or positive-negative phrasing. Some examples are mentioned below: *Aj.* 896 οἴ'χωκ', ὤλωλα, διαπεπόρθημαι, S. *El.* 131 οἶδά τε καὶ ξυνίημι τάδ', οὔ τί με φυγγάνει, *Ant.* 840-41 οὐκ οἰχομέναν ὑβρίζεις, ἀλλ' ἐπίφαντον, 1268-69 ἔθανες, ἀπελύθης, ἐμαῖς οὐδὲ σαῖσι δυσβουλίαις, *Hec.* 714 ἄρρητ' ἀνωνόμαστα, E. *Supp.* 1131-33 ἐγὼ δ' ἔρημος ἀθλίου πατρὸς τάλας ἔρημον οἶκον ὀρφανεύσομαι λαβών, οὐ πατρὸς ἐν χερσὶ τοῦ τεκόντος, *Tro.* 1292 ὄλωλεν οὐδ' ἔτ' ἔστι Τροία. As is suggested from the above, the employment of synonyms (e.g. *Aj.* 896, *Ant.* 1268) usually indicates great agitation, and it is this type of redundancy which is especially characteristic of kommoi, while that of positive-negative phrasing (e.g. *Ant.* 840-41, *Tro.* 1292) is used for calmer, more rational utterances, and, as Earp (1944, 102) remarks, "is frequent and idiomatic in Greek, and therefore hardly typical of a particular style."

Questions

Characteristic of the agitated mood of most kommoi is the accumulation of questions (often marked by anaphoric repetition) in one or more parts of them. I give some representative examples below.

Pers. 956-61, 966-72: The chorus begin their parts in the second strophe and antistrophe of the kommos with two questions each time (characterized in both cases by anaphora of ποῦ), which they address to Xerxes in a reproachful tone, asking about the fate of the Persian warriors.

Ag. 1541-50: Four successive questions (the first two and the last one with anaphoric repetition of τίς) show the chorus' indignation at Clytemnestra's audacity to perform the funerary rites for Agamemnon. Fraenkel (1950, III. on 1541) suggests that this type of question (usually with anaphora) conducting the mourning rites has most probably its origins in ritual.

Ant. 1284-92: Creon expresses his first reaction to the news of Eurydice's death with three questions, the last one two-fold, characterized by repeated anaphora of τίς, and the first one by anadiplosis as well.

O.C. 1685-88, 1715-17, 1734-36, 1748-50: With repeated questions Antigone and Ismene express their anxiety about the provision of their daily food and their future in general after Oedipus' death.

Alc. 863-64: In his first utterance in the kommos Admetus expresses his distress at Alcestis' death with a series of five brief, staccato questions marked by two successive anaphoric repetitions in 863 (with ποῖ and τί).

Tro. 161-62, 178-81, 184-85, 187-89: The repeated questions of the chorus throughout the parodos show their anxiety about their fate. Similarly, Hecuba expresses hers in 190-96, a long question characterized by asyndeton and repeated interrogative words (τῷ, ποῦ, πᾷ) indicating her distress at the thought of being a slave to the Achaeans.[8]

The accumulation of questions in kommoi seems to reflect a ritual practice: as Fraenkel (1950, III. on 1541) remarks, they were characteristic of the laments of the ancient Hebrews and other peoples, originally addressed most probably to the congregation of mourners.

Especially characteristic of kommoi are aporetic questions such as "what to do?", "where to turn?" or the like, indicating the difficult position of the mourner and/or his inability to escape a troublesome situation. Here are some examples: *Pers.* 912 τί πάθω τλήμων;,[9] *Cho.* 408-9 πᾷ τις τράποιτ' ἄν, ὦ Ζεῦ; (cf. the similar indirect question of the chorus in *Ag.* 1530-32 ἀμηχανῶ...ὅπᾳ τράπωμαι...), *Eum.* 788=818 τί ῥέξω;, *O.C.* 1737 ἀλλὰ ποῖ φύγω;, 1748 ποῖ μόλωμεν, ὦ Ζεῦ;, *Hipp.* 877-78 πᾷ φύγω βάρος κακῶν;.

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[8]Similar cases of repeated questions are abundant in kommoi: *Ag.* 1087, 1100-1, 1107-9, 1114, 1138-39, S. *El.* 236-38, *O.T.* 1307-10, 1327-28, 1334-35, 1337-39, *Phil.* 1089-91, 1159-62, *Hec.* 1056-65, 1070-84, E. *Supp.* 1134-37, E. *El.* 1194-97, 1198-1200.

[9]Questions in the form τί πάθω; are often delivered by the mourner (cf. also *Trach.* 973, *Andr.* 513, *Tro.* 792) and are parodied in Ar. *Lys.* 954, *Pl.* 603.

Another type of question characteristic of laments is that expressing the mourner's anxiety to find words appropriate for the occasion.[10] The magnitude of the calamity and the shock he experiences in the face of it make him feel that words may fail to express the depth of his sorrow. Examples of such questions include: *Sept.* 850 τί φῶ;, *Ag.* 1490-91=1514-15 πῶς σε δακρύσω; φρενὸς ἐκ φιλίας τί ποτ' εἴπω;, *Cho.* 315-18 τί σοι φάμενος ἢ τί ῥέξας τύχοιμ'...;, *Alc.* 863 τί λέγω; τί δὲ μή;, *Hec.* 154-55 τί ποτ' ἀπύσω; ποίαν ἀχώ, ποῖον ὀδυρμόν...;. Similar questions can be seen within a wider ritual context (e.g. in *Cho.* 855ff τί λέγω; πόθεν ἄρξωμαι...; the chorus wonder how to start their prayer to Zeus) or as expressive of any strong emotion (e.g. joy in *I.T.* 839 τί φῶ; and *Ion* 1446 τίν' αὐδὰν ἀύσω βοάσω;).

Asyndeton

Asyndeton is frequent in any excited passage, thus it is normally used in kommoi to indicate agitation, as, for example, in *Pers.* 924-27, *Sept.* 850, 857-58, *Ag.* 1101-3, *Aj.* 364-66, 394-97, *O.T.* 1340-46, *Alc.* 866-67, E. *El.* 1178-82, *Tro.* 168-72, 190-93, *Ion* 783-84. In most of the above cases the asyndetic structure is confined to a series of predicates defining a notion, whereas a series of verbs or of short, staccato sentences is used less frequently. Examples of this type of asyndeton include: *Pers.* 924ff +ἀγδαβάται+ γὰρ πολλοὶ φῶτες, χώρας ἄνθος..., *Sept.* 850 αὐτοφόνα δίμορα τέλεα τάδε πάθη, E. *El.* 1178ff ἴδετε τάδ' ἔργα φόνια μυσαρά, δίγονα σώματ'.... Characteristic are the cases where the mourner attributes to himself a series of predicates emphasizing them with the repetition of the definite article, which I have not found in similar cases of asyndeton in other lyrics (cf. *Aj.* 364-65 τὸν θρασύν, τὸν εὐκάρδιον, τὸν ἐν δαΐοις ἄτρεστον μάχαις, *O.T.* 1343-44 τὸν μέγ' ὀλέθριον, τὸν καταρατότατον, *Tro.* 190-92 ἁ τλάμων...ἁ δειλαία[11]), or describes another idea in this emphatic way (cf. the description of the boat of Charon in *Sept.* 857-58 as τὰν ἄστολον μελάγκροκον θεωρίδα, τὰν ἀστιβῆ Ἀπόλλωνι, τὰν ἀνάλιον).

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[10]Similar questions were also conventional in encomium and funeral oration (see Alexiou 1974, 161ff). For the common themes shared by the ἐπιτάφιος, the θρῆνος, the ἐγκώμιον and the ὕμνος see also Thomson (1953, 81ff).

[11]As Biehl (1989, on 134ff.) remarks, the adjective with the article is characteristic of Hecuba in *Tro.* (cf. also 36, 290-91).

Antiphony

Apart from the various forms of repetition within one's utterance, especially characteristic of kommoi is the antiphonal repetition between the two partners. Antiphony was a conventional feature of laments,[12] its usual form being the exchange between a single mourner and a chorus but, as the two distinct parts of the kommos of *Sept*. indicate, it could well take place between two groups of people or two individuals. It seems that the antiphonal dirge was eastern in origin,[13] which is in accordance with the reputation of the Orientals for extravagant lamentation. In kommoi, however, it is used alike by both Orientals and others, as illustrated, for example, in the exodoi of *Pers*. and *Sept*.

Antiphony can take various different forms. So two successive utterances (usually, but not necessarily, in the form of successive verses or in antilabic responsion) may begin with the same word or slightly changed (in a different inflection), so in effect it is a kind of anaphora each part of which is delivered by a different person. Some examples of this type of antiphony are to be found in *Pers*. 1002 βεβᾶσι γὰρ τοίπερ ἀγρέται στρατοῦ - 1003 βεβᾶσιν οἳ νώνυμοι, *Sept*. 962 δορὶ δ' ἔκανες - δορὶ δ' ἔθανες, 983 τάλαν γένος - τάλανα παθόν, *Andr*. 1197 ὀττοτοτοτοῖ - 1200 ὀττοτοτοτοῖ.[14] In other cases the second singer picks up the last word(s) of the first one taking further his thought, as in *Sept*. 931ff χερσὶν ὁμοσπόροισιν - ὁμόσποροι δῆτα καὶ πανώλεθροι, *Tro*. 1230ff οἴμοι - οἴμοι δῆτα σῶν ἀλάστων κακῶν, *I.T*. 201ff σπεύδει...ἐπὶ σοὶ δαίμων - ἐξ ἀρχᾶς μοι δυσδαίμων δαίμων. In these types of antiphony the repetition of the same word denotes agreement between the two speakers emphasizing a certain notion. Noticeable is the lack of such antiphonal effects in the Sophoclean kommoi which, as I have repeatedly stressed, present fewer ritual features than those of Aeschylus and Euripides.

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[12]Characteristic is that in *Phil*. 692-95 the chorus define Philoctetes' isolation on the island of Lemnos in terms of a lack of neighbour who could respond to his groans (694 στόνον ἀντίτυπον).

[13]See Nilsson (1911, 620, n. 2), Hall (1989, 83, n. 123; 1996, on 1040).

[14] An interesting case of this type of antiphony in later literature is found in Bion's *Epitaph. Adon*. 1-2: Αἰάζω τὸν Ἄδωνιν, "ἀπώλετο καλὸς Ἄδωνις". "ὤλετο καλὸς Ἄδωνις", ἐπαιάζουσιν Ἔρωτες (with similar antiphonal phrases in the rest of the poem as well). As Reed (1997, 196 under ἐπαιάζουσιν) argues, "the practice simulates a funeral lament with a leader (Bion's narrator) and a responding chorus."

Antiphony can also take the form of a response of the second singer to the preceding exhortation/question of the first one by picking up his words, as in *Pers.* 941 ἴετ' αἰανῆ πάνδυρτον - 944 ἥσω...πάνδυρτον, *Herc.* 1064 στέναζέ νυν - στενάζω, *Tro.* 1290 τάδ' οἷα πάσχομεν δέδορκας; - 1291 δέδορκεν. To this type of antiphony involving exhortation - answer belong also passages such as *Herc.* 1065-66, *Tro.* 1229-30 and the extensive one in *Pers.* 1038ff where the responses take the form of interjections. This type of antiphony also indicates agreement between the two partners as the one consents to the other. It is noticeable that the form of exhortation - answer is lacking in the Sophoclean kommoi where the role of *exarchos* is absent.

There are also cases of antiphonal repetition of the same word in the same verse in corresponding stanzas, which emphasizes the parallel utterances of two speakers, as in *Cho.* 315=332 and 346=364 πάτερ, 320=337 ὁμοίως, *Hel.* 207-8=226-27 λέλοιπε (in all cases, apart from the first, the word is found in the same position in the verse), or other antiphonal effects not based on close repetition or close succession of one another, but clearly indicating that the one participant takes into account the words of the other and develops his thought in one or another way. As representative examples may be cited: *Pers.* 285 φεῦ, τῶν 'Αθηνῶν ὡς στένω μεμνημένος - 287 μεμνῆσθαί τοι πάρα, 928 αἰαῖ <αἰαῖ> - 931 ὅδ' ἐγὼν οἰοῖ αἰακτός, *Sept.* 894 θανάτων ἀραί - 898-99 ἀραίῳ...πότμῳ, *Cho.* 334-35 ἐπιτύμβιος θρῆνος - 342 ἀντὶ δὲ θρήνων ἐπιτυμβιδίων, *O.T.* 1303 φεῦ φεῦ δύστην' - 1307-8 αἰαῖ αἰαῖ, δύστανος ἐγώ, *Ant.* 804 τὸν παγκοίταν ὅθ' ὁρῶ θάλαμον - 810-11 ἀλλά μ' ὁ παγκοίτας "Αιδας, E. *Supp.* 1126 ἐν δ' ὀλίγῳ - 1129 σποδοῦ τε πλῆθος ὀλίγον, *Tro.* 160 κινεῖται κωπήρης χείρ - 181 κινεῖν κώπας, *Hel.* 176-77 ὑπὸ μέλαθρα νύχια - 188-89 ὑπὸ δὲ πέτρινα γύαλα. Noticeably, there are fewer instances of this type of antiphony in the Sophoclean kommoi in comparison to the Aeschylean and Euripidean ones.

Antiphony seems to be a characteristic feature of kommoi, used rarely in other amoibaia of any of the three tragedians and even then confined to question/exhortation - response (e.g. *Trach.* 888-89, *Ion* 193-94). The only case of antiphony I have found in a ritual context other than in kommoi is *Bacch.* 590 σέβετέ νιν - σέβομεν ὦ (the chorus exhorting one another to show respect to Dionysus), but I have not found any cases of antiphony where the second speaker reinforces the ideas of the first by verbatim repetition (as in *Pers.* 1002-3, 1008-9), which suggests that this particular type was exclusively a feature of ritual laments. Sophocles uses the restrained form of antilabe very often to express strong emotions or an urgent situation while in the extant

plays of Aeschylus it is used only in the antiphonal section 961-65 of the kommos of *Sept*. It could be the case, then, that antilabic verses were originally used in antiphonal lamentation and extended later to cover other emotions or situations.

Verbal Symmetry

Verbal symmetry produced by repetition of any kind (especially anaphora), isometric cola, rhyme, assonance and various sound effects has its origins in ritual language, and is especially characteristic of the Aeschylean lyrics with such content. As examples may be cited the ritual lament in the first stasimon of *Pers*.: 550-52 Ξέρξης μὲν ἄγαγεν, ποποῖ, Ξέρξης δ' ἀπώλεσεν, τοτοῖ, Ξέρξης...=560-62 νᾶες μὲν ἄγαγον, ποποῖ, νᾶες δ' ἀπώλεσαν, τοτοῖ, νᾶες..., the responsion of the interjections φεῦ, ἠέ, ὀᾶ in 568=576, 569=577, 570=578, 573=581 respectively and of the phrases οὐράνι' ἄχη, δαιμόνι' ἄχη in 573=581; the almost religious awe the chorus exhibit before Darius in *Pers*. 694-95 σέβομαι μὲν προσιδέσθαι, σέβομαι δ' ἀντία λέξαι=700-1 δίομαι μὲν χαρίσασθαι, δίομαι δ' ἀντία φάσθαι.[15] Within this context can be better understood the remarkable verbal symmetry characterizing some of the Aeschylean kommoi. So in the first pair of the final kommos of *Pers*. it is used to give a description of the lamenting cries the Persians will raise: 936-37 κακοφάτιδα βοάν, κακομέλετον ἰάν - 940 πολύδακρυν ἰαχάν - 942 δύσθροον αὐδάν, 938 θρηνητῆρος=946 πενθητῆρος, 940 πέμψω=947 κλάγξω, 940 πολύδακρυν - 947 ἀρίδακρυν. In the second section of the kommos of *Sept*. similar effects are exploited to emphasize the equal fate of the brothers, e.g. 962 δορὶ δ' ἔκανες - δορὶ δ' ἔθανες,[16] 963 μελεοπόνος - μελεοπαθής, 965 πρόκεισαι - κατέκτας, 964 ἴτω γόοι - ἴτω δάκρυα, 972 διπλᾶ λέγειν - διπλᾶ δ' ὁρᾶν ~ 993 ὀλοὰ λέγειν - ὀλοὰ δ' ὁρᾶν (cf. also in the first section of the kommos 911-12 σιδηρόπληκτοι μὲν ὧδ' ἔχουσιν, σιδηρόπληκτοι δὲ τοὺς μένουσιν). The precise echoing in sound and structure in *Cho*. 327-28

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[15]Although symmetry in language has its origins in ritual, Aeschylus extends it to passages which do not have an obvious ritual content such as *Ag*. 785-86, *Cho*. 935-38=946-49, *Eum*. 157-61=164-67. For a detailed list of symmetrical phrases in Aeschylus see Diggle (1968, 4).

[16]For this kind of rhyme, which is especially frequent in late Euripides, cf. also A. *Supp*. 113 πάθεα μέλεα, *Tro*. 1303 κλύετε, μάθετε, *Ion* 764 ἔλαβον ἔπαθον, *Or*. 195 ἔκανες ἔθανες. In all these cases a row of short syllables prevails.

ὀτοτύζεται δ' ὁ θνήσκων, ἀναφαίνεται δ' ὁ βλάπτων functions almost as a magic spell for the appearance of the avenger.[17] In each case Aeschylus effectively adapts verbal parallelism to the requirements of his dramatic style.

In the Sophoclean and Euripidean laments symmetry in speech is not extended beyond a couple of verses - in the Sophoclean lyrics in general verbal symmetry is less prominent than in those of Aeschylus or Euripides - and in the majority of cases it is simply a verbal feature without a ritual background. Examples from kommoi include: *Aj.* 911 ἐγὼ δ' ὁ πάντα κωφός, ὁ πάντ' ἄιδρις, S. *El.* 197 δόλος ἦν ὁ φράσας, ἔρος ὁ κτείνας, *Ant.* 873-74 κράτος δ', ὅτῳ κράτος μέλει, παραβατὸν οὐδαμᾷ πέλει, *Alc.* 863 ποῖ βῶ; ποῖ στῶ; τί λέγω; τί δὲ μή;,[18] *Hec.* 695 τίνι μόρῳ θνήσκεις, τίνι πότμῳ κεῖσαι;, *I.T.* 227 οἰκτράν τ' αἰαζόντων αὐδὰν οἰκτρόν τ' ἐκβαλλόντων δάκρυον, *Hel.* 348 σὲ γὰρ ἐκάλεσα, σὲ δὲ κατόμοσα.[19]

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[17]Cf. Kranz (1933, 128). For an extensive discussion of the verbal symmetry characteristic in the ritual Aeschylean lyrics see Kranz (1933, 128ff). This feature of ritual language influenced the style of later Greek prose (see Fraenkel 1950, III. on 1541; Kranz 1933, 130), especially in its exploitation of balanced and antithetical clauses, which was taken to extremes by Gorgias (see Denniston 1952, 10ff).

[18]Precise verbal echoing is frequent in anapaestic verses (noticed also by Fraenkel 1922, 365, n. 2), as the metrical pattern is suitable for that (cf. also *O.T.* 1304-5, *Hec.* 157-58, *Tro.* 102, 110).

[19]Examples of symmetrical phrases from other Sophoclean and Euripidean laments include: S. *El.* 88-90, E. *Supp.* 73-74, 955-57=963-65, *Hec.* 629-30, E. *El.* 160-62, *Ion* 865, 868-69, *Pho.* 1291-92.

8. THEMES

Addresses to the dead

In the Homeric laments the next of kin direct their attention exclusively to the dead. This is possible since they are in the form of a monologue, uninterrupted by the other mourners. In the tragic kommoi, however, the dialogue between the principal mourner and the chorus excludes such a one-sided direction of the lament so that, although addresses to the dead are an integral part of the laments for them, they are not so extensive as in the Homeric ones. The closest equivalent in tragedy are the monologues for the dead where the attention of the mourner is focused wholly on the deceased (see pp. 132ff). In kommoi the only parallel cases are the monodic amoibaia where interruption from the coryphaeus is minor and passes unnoticed by the mourner (cf., for example, the extensive addresses to Neoptolemus by Peleus in *Andr*. 1181-83, 1188-96 or to Rhesus by the Muse in *Rhes*. 895-903).

The appearance of a corpse on stage, whether or not in a proper *prothesis*-scene, calls for lamentation and the consequent address to the dead. In most kommoi it is the closest relative who, as the chief mourner, addresses the dead,[1] but Koonce (1962, 58-59) is surely wrong to argue that the chorus do not address them at all, the only exception being in the lament for Ajax. The chorus do address the dead in other kommoi as well for various reasons, for example, in *Sept*. (875-78, 881-84, 887-92, 951-52, 961-65, 969-71, 989-92, 998-1001) since there is no next of kin to perform the customary invocation; in *Ag*. (1489-96=1513-20) as it is they instead of Clytemnestra who mourn for the dead king; their addresses to Astyanax in *Tro*. (1216-17,[2] 1227-28, 1251-55) are justified by their close attachment to him.[3]

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[1]Cf. *Aj*. 920, 923-24, *Ant*. 1266-69, 1300, 1319-20, 1340-41, *Hipp*. 826-29, 836-41, 848-51, 860, *Andr*. 1181-83, 1188-96, 1205-7, *Hec*. 684, 694-97, 706-7, E. *Supp*. 802-4, 1142-44, 1152, 1162-63, E. *El*. 1229, *Tro*. 1209-15, 1218-20, 1232-34, *Rhes*. 895-903, 912-13.

[2]I agree with Barlow (1986a, on 1216-17) and Biehl (1989, on 1216f.) that the addressee of these lines is Astyanax, not Hector, as Lee (1976, on 1216-17) argues.

[3]Other cases in kommoi where the chorus address the dead are *Cho*. 1008, *Hipp*. 811-16, E. *El*. 1185-89.

The content of the addresses to the dead varies, depending on the requirements of each kommos. So, for example, in *Sept*. the chorus repeatedly reproach, albeit pityingly, the two brothers for having killed one another; in the final kommos of *Ant*. Creon addresses Haemon and Eurydice only to blame himself for their death; in *Hipp*. 811-16 the chorus criticize Phaedra for her boldness in committing suicide, while in 848-51 Theseus praises her, ironically, for her virtue. A common theme in the address to the dead is the reproach by the mourner for having destroyed him by his death or having left him alone (cf. *Aj*. 901-2, *Hipp*. 839, *Andr*. 1205-7).[4]

In proper *prothesis*-scenes the mourner often touches the deceased while addressing him, a ritual gesture represented in funerary vases and mentioned in Homer as well (see pp. 11, 22-23 and n. 13). So in *Andr*. 1174 Peleus embraces the dead Neoptolemus while in 1181 he addresses, while touching, his mouth, beard and hands; a similar address to different parts of the body of the deceased while touching them is found in Hecuba's lament for Astyanax (*Tro*. 1178-80);[5] in *Rhes*. 902-3 the Muse holds Rhesus' head in her hands while addressing it. The touching of the corpse was a traditional gesture, always sought after by the close relatives: so in *Med*. 1399-1400, 1402-3 and E. *Supp*. 815-17 Jason and the chorus of mothers respectively express their desire to touch their dead children.

The address to the dead may include a simple vocative such as παῖ (e.g. *Ant*. 1266, 1340), τέκνον (e.g. *Ant*. 1300, *Andr*. 1192, E. *Supp*. 1162), γύναι (*Hipp*. 827, 841), πάτερ (e.g. E. *Supp*. 1138, 1142), ἄναξ (*Aj*. 901), or an adjective pointing to his misfortune, e.g. μᾶτερ ἀθλία (*Ant*. 1300), ὦ δύσμορ' Αἴας (*Aj*. 923), τάλας (*Aj*. 925), or another descriptive, more elaborate phrase, e.g. ὦ παῖδες, ὦ πικρὸν φίλων προσηγόρημα ματέρων (E. *Supp*. 802-3). In the kommos of *Sept*. repeated adjectives and participles are used to characterize the two brothers. An adjective frequently employed by Euripides in addresses to the dead as well as with reference to them is φίλος/φίλιος, indicating feelings of mutual love between the deceased and the bereaved, as in *Andr*. 1181, 1205, *Hipp*. 848-49, *Rhes*. 902-3 (addresses to the dead), and in *Alc*. 876, 917, *Supp*. 1137, 1153, 1162-63 (other references to them). The address

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[4]Cf., similarly, Andromache in *Il*. 22. 483-84, 24. 725-26. On this theme see also p. 96.

[5]This practice is exploited in its full dramatic potential in *Bacch*. 1329ff, Agave's monologue (the text is lost) over Pentheus' dismembered body, for which she and her sisters are responsible. For a discussion of this scene see Dodds (1960, on 1329).

φίλτατος is also very common for the dead (e.g. *Aj.* 977, S. *El.* 1126-27, 1163, *Bacch.* 1316).[6]

Addresses to the dead may occur even when their bodies are not present, when the circumstances do not allow it, or, naturally, when the death happened long ago. So in the great kommos of *Cho.* Agamemnon is repeatedly addressed (315-18, 332-35, 345-53, 363-66, 456, 459-60),[7] and with repeated imperatives (cf. 332, 456, 459-60), as the kommos is an appeal to him for help.[8] Oedipus' supernatural death in *O.C.* precludes a proper *prothesis*-scene; even so, however, Antigone directs two extensive addresses to him (1700-3, 1709-14), the first three-fold, ὦ πάτερ, ὦ φίλος, ὦ τὸν ἀεὶ κατὰ γᾶς σκότον εἱμένος, which is the only such example in the tragic laments, although the triple invocation of the dead seems to have been a customary ritual practice (cf. *Od.* 9. 65, Ar. *Frogs* 1176). Lesky (1943, 33, n. 1) suggests that Orestes' triple repetition of πάτερ in *Cho.* 491, 493, 495 reflects this practice, but this cannot be right since his invocations are not in a row, interrupted as they are by Electra. [9]

Wishes

Wishes which, if they were to be fulfilled, would spare the mourners their present suffering were conventional in laments, attested as early as in Homer (cf. *Il.* 22. 426, 481, 24. 764). In tragic kommoi unfulfilled wishes concerning the mourner or the deceased (when there is one) and referring to the past or the present are abundant and may occur in any part of them.

In the face of the extent of the present calamity the mourner frequently wishes he had died earlier. So Xerxes in *Pers.* 915-17 εἴθ' ὄφελε, Ζεῦ, κἀμέ...θανάτου κατὰ μοῖρα καλύψαι, and Adrastus in E. *Supp.* 821, both of them wishing they had died together with the other leaders, considering themselves responsible for the disaster. Often the sufferer expresses other wishes such as never to have got married, so that he would not have

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[6]Similarly in Homer (cf. *Il.* 19. 315, 24. 748, 762).

[7]Whether 360-62 are also addressed to Agamemnon is disputed. See p. 189.

[8]For similar addresses to Agamemnon long after his death cf. S. *El.* 100-2, E. *El.* 122-24, 143-49, 155-66.

[9]Other invocations of the dead in kommoi in absence of their bodies are found in *Ant.* 871, E. *Supp.* 1072, *Tro.* 1303, 1312-14, *I.T.* 170-77, *Pho.* 1352-53.

experienced the present deaths: so Admetus in *Alc.* 880-81 μήποτε γήμας ὤφελον οἰκεῖν... and the chorus of mothers in E. *Supp.* 786-88, 822-23. The chorus may also express the wish that the mourner had died earlier/on a different occasion, as in *Andr.* 1208 θανεῖν θανεῖν σε, πρέσβυ, χρῆν πάρος τέκνων and *Herc.* 1078-80 τότε θανεῖν σ' ἐχρῆν ὅτε....

Often the mourner wishes for death in the present, as Ismene in *O.C.* 1689-91 κατά με φόνιος Ἅιδας ἕλοι, so that she could share the same fate as Oedipus (ξυνθανεῖν);[10] Medea in *Med.* 144-47 and Adrastus in E. *Supp.* 829-31 wish for a violent death, the latter mentioning three different alternatives.[11] The wish for death is frequently expressed in the form of the question πῶς ἂν ὀλοίμην; (cf. *Alc.* 864, E. *Supp.* 796-97, *Rhes.* 751). The similar question delivered by Ajax in *Aj.* 388-91 πῶς ἄν...θάνοιμι καὐτός; is not simply a rhetorical one, as in the previous cases, since he means to kill himself.

Often the mourner wishes the deceased had met a different death or fate in general. So in *Cho.* 345-47 εἰ γὰρ ὑπ' Ἰλίῳ...δορίτμητος κατηναρίσθης Orestes wishes Agamemnon had met an honourable death in Troy. Peleus wishes the same for Neoptolemus in *Andr.* 1182-83,[12] expressing another unfulfilled wish for him later, that he had not married Hermione (*Andr.* 1189-92), a marriage which proved disastrous for him.

The mourner frequently expresses the wish that the enemies of the deceased and/or of himself had died. So in *Cho.* 367-68 Electra wishes Agamemnon's murderers had died instead of him.[13] Similar wishes may also refer to the present or future (thus they take the form of a curse). So in S. *El.* 126-27 the chorus wish death for Aegisthus (ὡς ὁ τάδε πορὼν ὄλοιτ') while

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[10]Similarly, in S. *El.* 1165ff Electra expresses her fervent desire to die, so as to share the same fate as Orestes. In *Aj.* 392-93 Tecmessa also states in advance that she would prefer to die (ὁμοῦ κἀμοὶ θανεῖν), if Ajax fulfils his threat to kill himself, while Helen in *Hel.* 348ff threatens to commit suicide if Menelaus is dead. In E. *Supp.* we find the extreme case of such a threat being actually accomplished: Evadne leaps onto Capaneus' pyre. Unwillingness of the mourner to survive the dead is also common in the funerary inscriptions: see Lattimore (1942, 203ff).

[11]Desire for death is frequently expressed by any person in suffering (cf., for example, *Aj.* 394-97, *Trach.* 1040-43, 1085-88, *Phil.* 797-98, *Alc.* 866-67, *Hipp.* 836-38, 1373-77). For the desire for violent death, in particular, cf. Io in *P.V.* 582, Andromache in *Andr.* 847-50 (each mentioning three different ways as well).

[12]Similarly, in S. *El.* 1131ff Electra wishes she had not saved Orestes from Agamemnon's murder, so that he would have died and buried together with him.

[13]The exact meaning of this passage is not clear. See p. 190, n. 31.

Electra in 209-12 that Zeus may make him and Clytemnestra suffer;[14] Philoctetes in *Phil.* 1113-15 wishes that Odysseus may suffer in the same way as he does.[15] Prayers and promises of vengeance were also traditional in dirges of many peoples: see Fraenkel (1950, III. 617).[16] So in *Ag.* 1507-8 the chorus wish for an avenger of Agamemnon's murder; in E. *Supp.* 1143-46 the chorus of sons promise to avenge the death of their fathers (cf., similarly, Achilles' promise to the dead Patroclus in *Il.* 18. 333ff).

Contrast between past - present, living - dead

In the tragic laments the mourner frequently contemplates the happiness of the past, contrasting it bitterly with the misery of the present, a theme found in the Homeric laments in a slightly different form, i.e. after a usually extensive digression to the past or an imaginable situation in the future (not necessarily pleasant, however, in either case), the mourner returns to the present (see pp. 23-24 and n. 20).[17] This contrast is usually expressed in two antithetical clauses, one referring to the past, usually introduced with one of the phrases τότε μέν, ποτὲ δή, ποτ' ὤν, and the other to the present, most times introduced with νῦν δέ. Here are some representative examples from kommoi.

Ag. 1157-61: Cassandra contrasts her growing up by the banks of Scamander with the doom that soon awaits her by the banks of Kokytos and Acheron (1158 τότε μέν - 1160 νῦν δ').

Aj. 421-27: Ajax compares his past glory with his present shameful situation (426 τανῦν).

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[14]For similar wishes against one's enemies in kommoi cf. also *Med.* 163-64, *Rhes.* 906ff.

[15]Cf. his similar curse in *Phil.* 791-95 as well as Heracles' for Deianeira in *Trach.* 1037-39. *Phil.* 1113 ἰδοίμαν δέ νιν reminds Ajax's threat against Odysseus in *Aj.* 384, which, however, is interrupted by the chorus.

[16]Accordingly, Reiner (1938, 21, n. 5) justifies the term θρῆνος Cassandra applies to her utterance in *Ag.* 1322 on the grounds that it contains a prayer for vengeance. Similarly Fraenkel (1950, III. 617), who, however, takes also into account the fact that it contains a general lament (on this subject see also my discussion on p. 134).

[17]The contrast between past - present was common in funerary epigrams (see Lattimore 1942, 172ff) as well as in hymns in the form "if ever before, so now" (see Alexiou 1974, 165).

Alc. 915-25: Admetus contrasts the happiness of his wedding-day with the sorrow of the present day of Alcestis' death (915 τότε μέν - 922 νῦν δ'), a contrast also defined in terms of the opposing songs and clothes accompanying wedding and funeral (922-23).[18]
E. *Supp*. 1129-30: The chorus of mothers contrast the small quantity of the ashes of the dead with their once glorious bodies (1130 δή ποτ').
Tro. 1217: Whether the addressee of this phrase is Hector or Astyanax (see p. 111, n. 2), the chorus contemplate with bitterness his present as contrasted with his past position as a great ruler (ποτ' ὤν).[19]

Juxtaposition between the fortunes of the deceased and the bereaved is characteristic of the Homeric laments (cf. *Il*. 19. 319-21, 22. 482-84, 24. 725-26), but is not frequent in the tragic ones nor always so explicit.[20] So in *Tro*. 1083-87 σὺ μέν...ἐμὲ δέ the chorus contrast the state of their dead husbands (unburied) with that of themselves (carried away as slaves). In *Tro*. 1312-14 Hecuba draws a similar juxtaposition, although more implicitly, between Priam's situation and her own. In the context of the contrast between living - dead we can see general statements such as ὁ θανὼν δ' ἐπιλάθεται ἀλγέων (*Tro*. 607), implying that the dead are in a better position than the living because they forget their sorrows (cf., similarly, *Alc*. 937, E. *Supp*. 86).

Narration of death

Narration of death was typical of threnos, exploited variously and effectively in kommoi for the requirements of each piece. In some of them it occupies a separate, distinguishable part of the lament, constituting its

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[18]The contrast between these two occasions is a common theme in laments, exploited brilliantly in *Ant*. 806ff, which I discuss extensively in pp. 215ff. Cf. also *Tro*. 1218-20, where Hecuba adorns Astyanax's body for his funeral with the fine clothes he would be normally wearing on his wedding-day, and *P.V*. 555-58, where the chorus compare their lamenting song for Prometheus (the reference is to 397ff) with the one they sang at his wedding.
[19]For other instances of this theme in kommoi cf. *Aj*. 410-11, *Phil*. 1150-52, *Tro*. 1221-23.
[20]For this theme see also Alexiou (1974, 171ff), who remarks that the contrast between 'you' and 'I' is exclusive to laments, by comparison with other literary forms sharing similar themes (hymn, encomium, epitaphios), where the second-person address predominates.

narrative section. So in *Pers*. 962-65, 976-77 (within the second and third strophic pair) Xerxes gives brief, vivid descriptions of the manner of death of the Persian leaders; in *Cho*. 430-33, 439 (in the second part of the kommos) Electra and the chorus respectively inform Orestes of the dishonour inflicted on Agamemnon's body after his death;[21] in E. *El*. 1206-26 (second pair and third strophe) Orestes and Electra describe Clytemnestra's supplication for her life and finally her killing; in *Hel*. 191-210 (second strophe) Helen informs the chorus of the disastrous news Teucer brought her. In the cases of *Pers*. and *Hel*. the narrative section comes after the description of the lamenting character of the kommos, in *Cho*. it follows the appeal to Agamemnon, which is renewed afterwards, in E. *El*. it is found between speculation on the future and concern for Clytemnestra's body in the present.

Similarly to the above cases, the description of Agamemnon's murder is given in a distinguishable part of the kommos in *Ag*. 1492-96=1516-20, the second choral ephymnion, the only one repeated twice and addressed wholly to the dead, and in S. *El*. 193-96, the only lamenting utterance of the chorus in the parodos.

In the cases of a messenger report the narrative of death/disaster is natural, given always in parts, as it is interrupted by the lamenting responses to it. So, for example, in *Pers*. 272-73, 278-79 the messenger gives a picture of the shores of Salamis filled with the Persian dead and of the naval battle respectively;[22] in *Aj*. 898-99, 906-7 Tecmessa reports Ajax's suicide with a sword, giving further (918-19) a repulsive description of his body still bleeding.

In some cases the mourners express their grief by giving a metaphorical description of the death of their beloved persons. So in *Hipp*. 828-29 Theseus speaks of Phaedra as a bird which had vanished from his hands and leapt into Hades while in E. *Supp*. 1139-41 the chorus of mothers give a metaphorical description of the journey of their sons to Hades after their corpses have been burnt (see p. 238).

The traditional practice of the narrative of a death after it has happened is reversed in those kommoi where it is described in advance. So in *Ag*. 1107-11, 1114-18, 1125-29 it is adjusted to Cassandra's prophetic talent as she describes her visions about Agamemnon's murder and later (1149) about

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[21] A description of Agamemnon's murder in the context of a lament is also given by Electra in her monodies in S. *El*. 95-99 and E. *El*. 157-66.

[22] A similar description of the death of the Persians with the addition of horrible details is found in another lament in the play, in the first stasimon 568-71, 576-78.

hers. Similarly, Antigone describes the manner of her death (*Ant.* 810-16, 847-52)[23] while Philoctetes also foresees his own, being deprived of his weapons (*Phil.* 1089-94, 1153-62), although in his case it does not finally happen.

In the Homeric laments there are no extensive descriptions of death of the kind found in the tragic kommoi; instead, brief phrases such as δεδαϊγμένος (*Il.* 19. 319), ταναήκεϊ χαλκῷ (*Il.* 24. 754) are used to describe one's killing in the battlefield.

Gestures of mourning

As has already been discussed (pp. 11ff), the performance of violent, self-inflicted gestures by the mourners was an essential part of the ritual expression of grief for the dead. In tragedy, references to such gestures are abundant, both in active demonstration and in indirect report. I mention below the relevant passages in kommoi.

Pers. 1046-65 is the longest passage in extant tragedy describing gestures of mourning, which are performed in between the raising of lamenting cries. It is structured in the form of exhortations by Xerxes and replies by the chorus and concerns the actions of beating the head (1046, 1052-53) and breast (1054), plucking the beard (1056-57) and hair (1062-63), and tearing the garments (1060). They are performed within the final section of the kommos in a highly stylized fashion as the chorus arrange themselves in a new formation escorting Xerxes out of the theatre. In *Sept.* 854-56 the chorus announce formally the beginning of their γόος for the two brothers, as they see their bodies arriving, by exhorting themselves to smite their heads. Similarly, the chorus open the narrative section of the kommos of *Cho.* by describing their extravagant gestures of smiting the breast and head (425-28).[24] As is obvious from the above, the description of demonstrative gestures in the Aeschylean kommoi has a formal function, i.e. as a programmatic announcement at the beginning of the kommos (*Sept.* 854ff) or as a formal conclusion to it (*Pers.* 1046ff) or opening to one of its sections (*Cho.* 425ff).

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[23]Polyxena in *Hec.* 205-10 also describes her imminent death.

[24]The case of Agamemnon is the only one in tragedy where similar gestures are continued long after death (cf. also *Cho.* 23-31, S. *El.* 89-90, E. *El.* 146-49), which was surely considered an abnormal behaviour (see pp. 206-7), in this case helping to keep alive the desire for revenge.

By contrast, in the Euripidean kommoi the description of similar gestures is simpler than in the Aeschylean ones and has no comparable formal function, as their performance is prompted by the immediate preceding statement. So in *Andr.* 1209-11 Peleus performs the traditional gestures of tearing the hair and beating the head as a response to the preceding choral statement that he should have died before his children (1208), thus indicating his agreement with the chorus about the magnitude of his loss. Similarly in *Supp.* 826-27, where the description by the mothers of their actions of tearing the cheeks and defiling the head with ashes responds to Adrastus' preceding invitation to them to look on their 'sea of troubles'[25] (824-25). Likewise, the ritual expression of the grief of the chorus in *Tro.* 1235-36 and *Pho.* 1351 is a reaction to the previous statements of Hecuba and the messenger respectively.[26]

Noticeable is the complete absence of similar references in the Sophoclean kommoi, which is strange, as Koonce (1962, 100-1) remarks, at least in a passionate lament such as that of Creon in *Ant.* It is obvious that Sophocles is not interested in the ritual expression of grief for the dead, but rather in the depiction of the emotions of the participants and the relationship between them.[27]

Announcements of lamentation

In the Aeschylean and Euripidean kommoi there are some extensive programmatic announcements of the lamentation of the chorus or a character (*Pers.* 935-47, *I.T.* 143-47, 179-85, *Hel.* 164-78), all of them found at the beginning of the kommos. In *Pers.* it takes the form of successive utterances by the chorus, Xerxes and the chorus again, where the Elders first state that they will deliver cries of an oriental nature, then Xerxes exhorts them to do so and they respond antiphonally. Emphasis is placed on the dismal, wild

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[25]κακῶν πέλαγος was such a common phrase (cf. also *Pers.* 433, *Hipp.* 822, *Herc.* 1088) that in *O.C.* 1746 πέλαγος is used in this context without further definition.

[26]For the performance of similar gestures in other lamenting passages of Aeschylus and Euripides cf. also A. *Supp.* 69-70, 120-21=131-32, *Andr.* 826-27, 830-31, E. *Supp.* 72-77, *Tro.* 793-94, *Pho.* 1490-91, *Or.* 961-63.

[27]In the Sophoclean plays there are only indirect references to similar gestures constituting the reaction to a recent disaster (cf. *Aj.* 310, 631-34, *O.C.* 1608-9).

content of their cries (see the discussion of the adjectives characterizing them in pp. 82-83). In *I.T.* the announcement of the lamentation occupies the beginning of two successive utterances by Iphigeneia and the chorus, Iphigeneia giving an elaborate description of her dirge with synonymous musical terms and decorative adjectives (see p. 84), and the chorus replying antiphonally by describing, also in an elaborate way, the asiatic dirge they will raise.[28] The passage in *Hel.* is abundant in references to musical terms and instruments, as the heroine tries to define the kind of musical accompaniment she needs for her dirge.

As with the description of mourning gestures, there is nothing comparable to these programmatic announcements in the Sophoclean kommoi, which, accordingly, suggests that Sophocles is not interested in drawing attention to the musical content of his laments (on this see also pp. 84-85). Apart from the above extensive passages there are also some brief formal announcements of lamentation in the Aeschylean and Euripidean kommoi: *Sept.* 964 ἴτω γόος - ἴτω δάκρυα, a renewed announcement of the γόος of the chorus; *Andr.* 1197-99 θανόντα δεσπόταν γόοις νόμῳ τῷ νερτέρων κατάρξω, where the chorus announce the beginning of their dirge for Neoptolemus; *Hec.* 685-86 κατάρχομαι[29] νόμον βακχεῖον, where, similarly, Hecuba announces her dirge for Polydorus.

Brief consolatory statements by the chorus

The employment of consolation by the chorus to comfort the mourner makes explicit their emotional distance from his suffering, since they are in a position to detach themselves from the immediate situation and indulge in generalized, quasi-philosophical reflections. The mourner, however, is so preoccupied with his misfortune that he ignores the consolation of the chorus continuing his lament or replies with indignation (as Electra in S. *El.* 861ff), so the gap between his agitation and the detachment of the chorus is emphasized. The role of the latter in this case is similar to that of the choral performances of Simonides and Pindar in that they are addressed to the bereaved/sufferer attempting to comfort him, thus

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[28]For this choral announcement see Moutsopoulos (1984).

[29]This verb is normally used to denote the beginning of a ritual procedure (cf. E. *El.* 1222, *I.T.* 40, *Herc.* 750, 889 and, with reference to a dirge, *Or.* 960 κατάρχομαι στεναγμόν).

they naturally share some consolatory themes with their *threnoi*, especially those of Simonides.

In S. *El*. 860 the chorus try to console Electra for the death of Orestes with the statement that death is common to all, πᾶσι θνατοῖς ἔφυ μόρος, the consolation *par excellence*, as Lattimore (1942, 250-51) remarks, not only of classical but also of modern times.[30] A similar statement is used by the chorus in *O.C.* 1722-23 κακῶν γὰρ δυσάλωτος οὐδείς. Frequent is also consolation of the type "It is not only you who suffers. Others have lost their loved ones as well", as in S. *El*. 153-54 οὗτοι σοὶ μούνᾳ, τέκνον, ἄχος ἐφάνη βροτῶν, *Alc*. 892-94 οὐ σὺ πρῶτος ὤλεσας...γυναῖκα..., and the similar statements in *Alc*. 417-18, 932-34 and *Hipp*. 834-35.

Often the chorus try to offer solace by considering God responsible for all turns in human life, as in *Aj*. 383 ξὺν τῷ θεῷ πᾶς καὶ γελᾷ κὠδύρεται and *O.C.* 1694-95 τὸ θεοῦ καλῶς φέρειν (cf. the similar type of comfort in *Andr*. 851-52, *Hipp*. 437-38).[31] The insistence on the weakness of mortals, who are, therefore, completely dependent on the gods is common in Simonides (cf. frs 525-27). Close to the above thought is the fatalistic approach reflected in *Ant*. 1337-38 ὡς πεπρωμένης οὐκ ἔστι θνητοῖς συμφορᾶς ἀπαλλαγή, which is common in the epitaphs as well.[32]

Frequently the chorus try to persuade the mourner of the uselessness of lamentation, a theme going back to *Il*. 24. 524, as in S. *El*. 137-39 ἀλλ' οὗτοι τόν γ' ἐξ 'Αΐδα παγκοίνου λίμνας πατέρ' ἀνστάσεις οὔτε γόοισιν, οὐ λιταῖς,[33] *Alc*. 875, E. *El*. 193-95. That lamentation leads nowhere is a commonplace in tragedy (cf. also *Aj*. 852, *Alc*. 1079, E. *Supp*. 770, *Pho*. 1762). Related to the above thought is the view that it is not worth lamenting for past misfortunes since they cannot be undone (cf. *Aj*. 377-78), so one should

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[30]Cf. *inter alia* Simon. frs 520, 522, *Ant*. 361-62, and the similar phrases in S. *El*. 1173 and *Alc*. 419, 782. For other cases in Greek and Latin literature and especially in the epitaphs see Lattimore (1942, 251ff).

[31]The responsibility for the disaster is often attributed to a divine power not specifically named such as θεός (e.g. *Pers*. 283, *Ant*. 1273, *Andr*. 1204), δαίμων (e.g. *Pers*. 911, 921, 942, *O.T*. 1301, 1328, *Alc*. 914), μοῖρα (*Pers*. 909, *Sept*. 975=986, *Hel*. 212). In a fewer number of cases a specific deity is mentioned, e.g. Apollo in *Ag*. 1073=1077, 1080=1085, *O.T*. 1329, Athena in *Aj*. 401-3, 953-54, Zeus in *Herc*. 1087-88.

[32]See Lattimore (1942, 218-19).

[33]Cf., similarly, *Alc*. 986-88, statements contrasted to the power of γόος as described elsewhere in tragedy.

try to face the present situation (cf. *Ant.* 1334-35 τῶν προκειμένων τι χρὴ πράσσειν).[34]

In view of the extent of the calamity that has befallen the mourner, the chorus reasonably often show an understanding response to his grief,[35] as in *O.T.* 1319-20 καὶ θαῦμά γ' οὐδὲν ἐν τοσοῖσδε πήμασιν διπλᾶ σε πενθεῖν...,[36] *Alc.* 873 πέπονθας ἄξι' αἰαγμάτων, 874 δι' ὀδύνας ἔβας, σάφ' οἶδα,[37] 876, 891-92. Noticeable is that all the above choral statements are found exclusively in the Sophoclean and Euripidean kommoi. Their complete absence from the Aeschylean ones is indicative of the attitude of the chorus towards the mourner, that is, either uniting their voices with him or, when not, showing their enmity or pity without averting him from lamentation.

Mythological *exempla*

Mythological *exempla* were a basic characteristic of Greek thought, used extensively in various cases, i.e. lamentation, consolation, reproach.[38] In tragedy they are especially widespread and elaborate in its lyric parts while in the dialogic ones they are fewer and much simpler.

The most common mythological parallel in lamenting passages is the comparison of female lamentation to that of Procne-nightingale, which goes back to *Od.* 19. 518ff.[39] As Segal (1995, 120) points out, this parallelism "perhaps corresponds to a feeling that this intensely emotional utterance is akin to the wildness of nature and lies beyond familiar human discourse." Procne and Niobe are the archetypal figures of eternal mourning, the former

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[34]For a detailed discussion of the basic *topoi* of consolation in Greek tragedy see Ciani (1975) and for a more general study on the consolatory themes in Greek and Latin literature Kassel (1958).

[35]This attitude is parodied in Ar. *Lys.* 961 κἄγωγ' οἰκτίρω σ'.

[36]Cf., similarly, *Aj.* 940-41, although in this case the chorus suffer equally to Tecmessa.

[37]For this phrase cf. E. *El.* 1210 and *Pho.* 1561, in the latter case addressed to Oedipus by Antigone, who is also a sufferer.

[38]See Oehler (1925).

[39]For the lamenting voice of the nightingale in Homer and tragedy see Segal (1993b, 66-73) and for the nightingale especially in tragedy Loraux (1998, 57-65).

lamenting for her son Itys whom she herself killed[40] according to the most familiar version of the story, in order to take vengeance on her husband Tereus for the rape of her sister Philomela.[41] Comparisons with the mourning of the nightingale are abundant in tragedy: A. *Supp.* 60ff (with an extensive narrative of the story as well), *Ag.* 1140ff, *Aj.* 622ff, S. *El.* 107ff, 147ff, 1075ff, *Trach.* 105ff, 963 (cf. also *Hel.* 1107ff and *Pho.* 1515ff[42] where the nightingale is invoked to accompany a mourning song). In two of the above passages, *Ag.* 1140ff and S. *El.* 147ff, the mythological parallels occur in the context of a kommos. In *Ag.* 1140-45 the chorus compare Cassandra's mourning for her impending doom with that of the nightingale, a comparison Cassandra picks up in 1146-49 only to contrast the brutal end that awaits her (1149) with the sweet life of the nightingale (1148 γλυκύν τ' αἰῶνα), who was rescued by the gods from a violent death at the hand of Tereus by being transformed into a bird.[43] In S. *El.* 147-49 Electra compares her steadfastness in lamentation for Agamemnon with the perpetual mourning of the nightingale.[44]

Like Procne, Niobe laments for her many children, who were killed by Apollo and Artemis as a punishment of her own arrogance. This mythological parallel is less frequent in tragedy than that of the nightingale,

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[40]For such references in tragedy cf. A. *Supp.* 65-66 ὡς αὐτοφόνως ὤλετο πρὸς χειρὸς ἔθεν, S. *El.* 107 τεκνολέτειρ', *Rhes.* 549 παιδολέτωρ.

[41]For a detailed discussion of the myth of Procne see Fontenrose (1948) and for the nightingale in Greek myth and life in general Thompson (1936, 16-22).

[42]Here and in *Trach.* 105ff the nightingale is not explicitly mentioned. However, the reference to its sleeplessness in the passage of *Trach.* (on which cf. also *Od.* 19. 515ff, S. *El.* 92ff), and the similar phrasing of *Pho.* 1515ff to *Hel.* 1107ff as well as the use of the adjective μονομάτωρ (1517) do not leave any room for doubt.

[43]In my interpretation of the comparison I accept the readings of Page's text (1972) μόρον (1145) and βίος (1146). For a different interpretation see Fraenkel (1950, III. 522-24), who accepts βίον and μόρον respectively.

[44]Female lamentation is often compared with the cries of other birds apart from the nightingale, the point of the comparison being obviously their high-pitched voice (see pp. 83-84). So, for example, in *Ag.* 1444ff Cassandra's lament for her impending death is compared with that of the swan on a similar occasion; in E. *El.* 151ff the mourning of the swan is adjusted to Electra's case: he laments for his father, perished in a guileful net like Agamemnon; in *Tro.* 146ff Hecuba's lamenting song is compared with that of a mother-bird for her nestlings, appropriately since she is the mother *par excellence* who has lost her many children; in *I.T.* 1089ff the chorus compare their lamentation for the loss of their homeland with that of the halcyon for her dead husband.

used twice in kommoi, in S. *El.* 150-52 and *Ant.* 823-33. In the first case it follows that of Procne, as Electra continues the comparison of her lamentation for Agamemnon with reference to Niobe's everlasting grief. In *Ant.* 823ff Antigone treats the myth of Niobe so as to apply it to the unusual manner of her living death, thus rejecting the previous choral statement that her fate is unique. However, the chorus reject this parallelism, emphasizing Niobe's divine origin in contrast to Antigone's mortality (834-35).[45] In *Hel.* 375-85 Helen mentions the cases of two mythical figures, Callisto and Merops' daughter, who, like her, suffered at the hands of the gods because of their beauty by being transformed into animals. However, she considers them fortunate since with their metamorphosis they forgot their sorrows.[46]

In the above cases the employment of mythological parallels occurs either in an exchange between the participants arranged in singly divided stanzas (S. *El.* 147ff, *Ant.* 823ff, *Ag.* 1140ff) or in a monodic utterance (*Hel.* 375ff),[47] which is reasonable since an agitated line by line exchange would not allow the development of an elaborate comparison. It is not accidental that in all these cases it is a female figure to whom a mythological parallel is applied since it was female lamentation that was considered excessive (see pp. 16ff). In the passages of *Ag.* and *Ant.* the chorus and Antigone respectively suggest a comparison which their partners (Cassandra and the chorus) do not fully accept. That shows a general lack of understanding between them and the different view-points they adopt, which are evident throughout the kommoi, resulting in the intensification of the feeling of isolation the heroine experiences. In *El.* 147ff the chorus do not comment on Electra's parallelisms, but their disapproval of her attitude throughout the parodos shows that they find them appropriate for her case.

What is common in all the above *exempla* is that a female figure is transformed after great suffering into something other than a human being, an animal or, in the case of Niobe, a rock. In this way two of them, Callisto and Merops' daughter, forget their troubles, while Niobe and Procne perpetuate their lamentation, although it is perhaps mitigated in their new form.[48] By comparing themselves with mythological figures the tragic

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[45]For an extensive discussion of this parallelism see pp. 220ff. The image of the rock streaming with water in *Andr.* 532-34 as well as in 116 (in both cases compared with Andromache's tears) may also suggest the myth of Niobe: see Stevens (1971, on 534).

[46]For this comparison see p. 259.

[47]The kommos starting in 330ff concludes with a monody (see pp. 257ff).

[48]Cf. *Herc.* 1397 where Heracles wishes he may become a stone so as to forget his troubles.

heroines enhance their suffering and give it an archetypal form. It is a way for them to console themselves in the thought that their fate has something in common with a figure who, through intolerable suffering, has reached a more elevated, respected position (S. *El*. 147ff, *Ant*. 823ff) or to stress their misery beyond any expected point by considering such a figure in a much better position than themselves (*Ag*. 1146ff, *Hel*. 375ff). In both cases they manage to elevate themselves above the ordinary human standard, a process implicit in their comparison with figures who underwent a transformation, and thus point to their greatness.

In S. *El*. 837-45 the chorus try to console Electra through myth, a practice frequent in the lyric *threnoi* as well (cf. Simon. fr. 523, Pindar frs 128c, 135). They choose the example of Amphiaraus, commenting on the similarities with Agamemnon's fate: his deception by his wife Eriphyle and his powerful state in the underworld (841 πάμψυχος ἀνάσσει), thus implying that Agamemnon holds a similar position. Electra, however, can see only the differences between the two cases (846-48): Amphiaraus was avenged by his son in contrast to Agamemnon. Thus the chorus have failed to console her, as they had intended to do, since she contrasts the fortunate position of Amphiaraus with the wretched state of Agamemnon. However, despite her rejection of their parallelism, the audience knows that Orestes is alive, so the example of Amphiaraus is indeed applicable to Agamemnon's case.

In *Alc*. 903-11 the chorus try to comfort Admetus by referring to a personal example, that of a relative of theirs who lost his only child but still endured his misfortune,[49] which of course does not fit Admetus' case but is intended to teach endurance in general in the hardships of life, especially since to lose an only child was much worse than to lose a wife.[50] This is the only case in tragedy where the chorus try to console the sufferer by referring to a particular personal case, which is arguably in accordance with the quasi-'comic' level on which *Alc*. operates. Tragedy proper attempts consolation either through generalized statements of human experience or through mythological parallels. By contrast, comic drama, to which *Alc*. is closer,[51]

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[49]For a discussion of the view that the person mentioned here may be Anaxagoras see Dale (1954, on 903ff).

[50]See Dale (1954, on 906).

[51]For comic elements in *Alc*. see Seidensticker (1982, 129-52). Scholars have also recognized an ironic quality in *Alc*. (cf., for example, Smith 1968) and have seen Admetus' emotionality as recalling that of more sober tragedy. For example, his attempt to throw himself into

includes within its diverse range the well-known propensity for taking its examples from particular cases of everyday life.

Alcestis' grave, from which the chorus prevents him (897ff), resembles Haemon's actual suicide in *Ant.*, or, similarly, that of Evadne in E. *Supp.* (see Segal 1993a, 59-60).

III. OTHER TRAGIC LAMENTS

Choral Odes

As Appendix II shows, Sophocles employs fewer choral odes with threnetic character than either Aeschylus or Euripides, and of these Euripides uses them more often in his extant plays, at least in terms of their frequency in some of them (for example, in *Supp.*, *Herc.* and *Tro.* there are four such odes).[1]

A general consideration of their dominant rhythms leads to conclusions similar to those of kommoi. Iambics seem to be associated with lamentation for the dead, since they are used especially when a death, past or imminent, is lamented, as, for example, in *Sept*. 832ff, *Cho*. 22ff, *Trach*. 947ff, E. *Supp*. 778ff, 918ff. Accordingly, it is characteristic that in the first and second pair of the parodos of E. *Supp*., which contain the supplication of the mothers to Aethra, ionics prevail, whereas in the third pair, which contains the vivid expression of their grief for the death of their sons, iambics are dominant, along with some trochaics. However, the normal practice during the *prothesis* was a shared lament between two participants. Of the odes concerning a recent death only in E. *Supp*. 918ff are the bodies of the dead present while in *Herc*. 1016ff they are made visible towards the end of the choral song, which is followed by antiphonal exchanges over them (in *Herc*. 1042ff). Similarly, it is characteristic that the odes in *Sept*. 832ff and E. *Supp*. 778ff are sung before the bodies of the dead are brought in, while afterwards an antiphonal lament takes place (*Sept*. 875ff, *Supp*. 798ff).

Dochmiacs are often used in combination with iambics, as in kommoi, to indicate violent emotions. So, for example, in *Herc*. 1016ff they express the horror at the murders Heracles has executed while in *Pho*. 1284ff the passionate lament in advance for the two brothers. It is characteristic that in *O.T.* 1186ff the first strophic pair, which contains general thoughts about the fate of mortals, is aeolic,[2] while in the second, where the chorus refer to Oedipus' deeds and are obviously more agitated, the metre changes to iambic with some hypodochmiacs and choriambs.

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[1]It goes without saying that in all similar cases we must treat evidence of this kind with caution since the plays we have represent only a small proportion of the total output.

[2]The aeolic metre is usually used in contemplative odes with an elaborate style and denotes a certain calmness of emotion, as, for example, in *Aj.* 1185ff, *Hec*. 444ff, *Herc*. 348ff, *I.T.* 1089ff.

Most of these choral odes include or are preceded by self-references to their lamenting character. In the first stasimon of *Pers*. and the third of *Sept*. it is announced in the anapaestic sections preceding them[3] (*Pers*. 546-47, *Sept*. 825ff), while in two other cases at the very beginning of the ode (*P.V*. 397-98, *Trach*. 947). More frequently, however, the mournful character of an ode is indicated in the use of a formal or other term referring to lamentation. So, for example, the Danaids call their song an οἶκτος (A. *Supp*. 59) and later an ἰήλεμος (115), the latter term being also applied to the parodos of *Herc*. (110) and possibly the fourth stasimon of *O.T*. (1219);[4] the first stasimon of *Herc*. is defined as a dirge for Heracles, who is considered dead, by its very first word (348 αἴλινον); the first stasimon of *Hel*. is announced as a θρῆνος (1112) for the sufferings of Helen and the women of Troy (1113-16), which, however, is redefined in the course of the ode as a dirge for the woes caused to the Trojans and the Greeks.

A brief consideration of the subjects of the choral lamenting odes of tragedy indicates their great diversity, varying from ritual, agitated laments (*Pers*. 548ff, *Pho*. 1284ff) to calmer expressions of grief (*P.V*. 397ff, *Aj*. 1185ff, *Hec*. 444ff, E. *Supp*. 955ff, *Tro*. 1060ff), direct praise of the dead (*Herc*. 348ff) or odes including an elaborate description/narrative (*Tro*. 511ff, *I.T*. 1089ff) or a philosophical consideration (*Hel*. 1107ff). The threnetic odes are generally calmer in tone than kommoi, with the exception of *Pers*. 548ff and *Pho*. 1284ff, whose agitated mood is reflected in the accumulation of interjections, repetitions, symmetrical phrases, rhymes and other similar effects. Interesting is also the case of *Herc*. 348ff[5] whose predominant tone, although it is announced as a dirge, is not that of lamentation but of a hymn, an encomium (cf. 355 ὑμνῆσαι, 356 δι' εὐλογίας, 358 ἄγαλμα).[6] Praise for the dead was a traditional element of laments (cf. the Homeric γόοι), and frequently in ancient sources the terms threnos and encomium are identified (see p. 29, n. 6). In some odes the chorus, prompted by a specific case, express their thoughts about the fate of mortals in general, as in *O.T*. 1186ff and with

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[3]A short choral anapaestic system preceding a stasimon is confined to Aeschylus: cf. also *Pers*. 623-33, *Supp*. 625-29, *Ag*. 355-66, *Eum*. 307-20.

[4]See p. 76, n. 6.

[5]The length of this ode and the formality of its structure suggest that Euripides had hieratic forms in mind (see Bond 1988, 147-48), which is reminiscent of the ritual character of several Aeschylean stasima.

[6]From this point of view it is similar to the second stasimon of *Alc*. (435-75), which, however, is devoted entirely to the praise of the heroine without any hint of lamentation.

similar phrasing in *Or.* 976ff, *Or.* 340. These statements concerning the instability of the lives of mortals recall the pessimistic tone of the Simonidean fragments. A more extensive expression of such thoughts is found in *Hel.* 1137ff, where the chorus give a philosophical consideration of the nature of god and the unexpected changes of fortune. In all these cases the chorus can distance themselves from the present suffering since they are not involved in it, and indulge in general thoughts. By contrast, the mourners in kommoi are so preoccupied with their own misfortune that they cannot see beyond it (surprisingly, however, in such an agitated kommos as *Ant.* 1261ff we find a similar, though brief, statement: 1276 ἰὼ πόνοι βροτῶν δύσπονοι).

Monodies

Euripides was the first of the tragedians to employ the monody regularly in his plays, exploiting its many potentialities for the expression of personal suffering, especially of his heroines, as the majority of them are delivered by female characters. It is characteristic, as Barner (1971, 285) remarks, that all the Euripidean monodies, apart from Ion's (*Ion* 82ff) and Cassandra's (*Tro.* 308ff), contain threnetic elements. The ancient lexicographers had also noticed the threnetic character of the monody, so they define it as θρῆνος, as *Suid.* s.v. μονῳδεῖν: τὸ θρηνεῖν· ἐπιεικῶς γὰρ πᾶσαι αἱ ἀπὸ σκηνῆς ᾠδαὶ ἐν τῇ τραγῳδίᾳ θρῆνοί εἰσιν, and the scholiast on *Andr.* 103: μονῳδία ἐστὶν ᾠδὴ ἑνὸς προσώπου θρηνοῦντος.

All the monodies mentioned on Appendix III are astrophic with the exception of E. *El.* 112-166, which is strophic with an elaborate structure, and *Andr.* 103-116, which cannot be classified in any of the two categories.[7] Regarding the metres used, there seems to be a special preference for anapaests, which are prevalent in four monodies (S. *El.* 86-120, *Hipp.* 1347-78 *Tro.* 98-152, *Ion* 859-922). Elaboration of metre with sudden shifts from the one to the other is characteristic of Euripides' late monodies (cf. *Pho.* 1485-1529, *Or.* 1369-1502, *I.A.* 1279-1335) in accordance with the new dithyrambic music of the late 5th cent.,[8] for which he is parodied by Aristophanes (see pp. 139, 141).

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[7] See Barner (1971, 293).

[8] For an extensive discussion of it see Zimmermann (1992, 122ff).

Andr. 103-116 is of particular interest in that it is the only example of elegiac metre in extant Greek tragedy and, what is more surprising, the first instance of an elegiac threnos in Greek literature. Although a great number of elegies from earlier times survives, none of them is a dirge, despite the association between the two in ancient sources.[9] Page (1936) traced the literary ancestor of this lament to a lost Peloponnesian tradition of threnodic elegies written at least as early as the beginning of the 6th cent. Bowie (1986, esp. 22-27), however, rejects this hypothesis, arguing that ἔλεγος came to mean 'lament' and was associated with the elegiac metre towards the end of the 5th. cent.[10] On the other hand, Alexiou (1974, 104-5) suggests that the gnomic and consolatory tone of the surviving elegies may well have been an expansion of their original funereal theme. The dactylic metre of Andromache's lament is appropriate to its epic subject,[11] and is also used in other laments with Homeric reminiscences: so the dactylic opening of the first stasimon of *Tro.* (511ff) is probably suggested by the appeal to the Muse to sing, which is characteristic of epic poetry but unique in the lyrics of tragedy; in *Tro.* 595ff the employment by Andromache and Hecuba mostly of dactylic hexameters may be used to evoke their laments for Hector in *Iliad* 24.

Monodies are positioned particularly at the beginning or end of a play. Those preceding the parodos form a special category (cf. S. *El.* 86ff, *Andr.* 103ff, E. *El.* 112ff, *Tro.* 98ff), where the heroine offers an exposition of her suffering before it becomes the object of the subsequent exchange.[12] As Appendix III shows, monodies may concern a variety of subjects, but it is noticeable that only in one case (*Pho.* 1485ff) are recent deaths lamented with the bodies of the deceased being present,[13] which shows, as in the case of choral odes, that this form was not traditional for the delivery of a lament at the *prothesis*. Although monody is suitable for the expression of personal emotions in contrast to the generalized, gnomic character of a choral song, the heroine can sometimes distance herself from her present suffering turning into a long, elaborate description which would better suit a choral ode (cf. *Tro.* 122ff, *I.A.* 1283ff, in both cases marked by change of metre and shift in time as

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[9]See p. 75, n. 4. For the affinity between them see also Harvey (1955, 170-71).

[10]For this discussion see also Lloyd (1994, on 103-116).

[11]However, as Page (1936, 220-21) remarks, the Homeric reminiscences in the phraseology of this passage are considerably restricted.

[12]See pp. 46-47. For this special category of monodies see also Barner (1971, 309).

[13]The arrival of the corpses is announced in a conventional anapaestic introduction by the coryphaeus (*Pho.* 1480-84) like those preceding kommoi in similar cases.

well), or to generalized lamenting statements similar to those found in some choral odes (cf. *Hipp.* 669 and, especially, *I.A.* 1330-32, distinguished metrically from its surroundings).

As in the case of choral odes, self-references to lamentation are abundant in monodies. Below are cited indicatively some examples from the two monodies concerning Agamemnon's death: S. *El.* 88 θρήνων ὠδάς, 94 θρηνῶ, 100 οἶκτος, 104 θρήνων στυγερῶν τε γόων, E. *El.* 113=128 ἔμβα ἔμβα κατακλαίουσα, 125-26 ἴθι τὸν αὐτὸν ἔγειρε γόον. Although Electra announces her song as a lament in *Or.* 984 (ἵν' ἐν θρήνοισιν ἀναβοάσω), she proceeds to give a review of the story of the Pelopidae in ornate language (thus it is reminiscent of choral odes in similar style, which are originally defined as dirges).[14] Andromache announces her monody in the trimeters preceding it (*Andr.* 91-93, 96).

Amoibaia between actors

As Appendix IV shows, all the threnetic amoibaia between actors are Euripidean apart from one Aeschylean (*P.V.* 561-608) and one Sophoclean example (*Trach.* 971-1043). In fact, it was Euripides who developed this form of exchange while in the Aeschylean plays the above passage is the only such example and in the Sophoclean ones there is only one more (*El.* 1232-87, expressing Orestes' and Electra's joy at their recognition). It is also characteristic that the majority of the Euripidean amoibaia between actors have threnetic character (10 out of 15 in his extant complete plays).

The lyric amoibaia are fewer than the epirrhematic ones, found especially in Euripides' later plays, and, as in the case of kommoi, denote a close emotional affinity between the participants. So in *Hec.* 154ff and *Pho.* 1530ff the two participants mourn for the same misfortune and, similarly, in *Tro.* 577ff and *Pho.* 1710ff, where they share the same fate as well. *Hec.* 154ff is marked by extreme agitation reflected in the asyndetic structure throughout it, the accumulation of questions, anadiploses, anaphoric repetitions and exclamatory phrases. In *Tro.* 577ff the first two strophic pairs and the beginning of the third constitute a characteristic example of ritual lament, as each participant repeatedly interrupts the utterances of the other and, picking

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[14]Damen (1990) argues that Electra's monody may in fact be no monody at all but a choral ode adapted for solo voice at some later date.

up her words, complements them (this effect is more emphatic in the antilabic verses of the first and third pair). Iambic is the predominant metre in the lyric amoibaia, used exclusively in the first and second pair of *Tro*. 577ff and in combination with other metres in the two amoibaia in *Pho*.

As in kommoi, the contrast between the lyric utterance of one participant and the spoken or recitative of the other (epirrhematic amoibaia) may indicate lack of communication, different emotional levels, disagreement or even enmity between them. So, for example, in *Alc*. 244ff no communication between Alcestis and Admetus is achieved (it is characteristic that she does not address him at all during the amoibaion); in *Trach*. 971ff Heracles' agitated utterances as he is in intolerable pain are contrasted with the calmer tone of Hyllus and the old man; in *Andr*. 825ff Hermione's frenzied despair is opposed to the effort of the nurse to restrain her.[15] The epirrhemas used are trimeters (in *Alc*. 393ff, *Tro*. 235ff, *Andr*. 825ff), anapaests (in *Med*. 96ff, *Andr*. 501ff), a combination of the two (in *Alc*. 244ff), and the rare one of dactylic hexameters (shared by the old man and Hyllus in *Trach*. 1018-22).[16]

As Appendix IV shows, the content of the threnetic exchanges between actors is variable, but it is noticeable that only one of them, *Alc*. 393ff, represents a proper *prothesis*-scene - *Pho*. 1530ff, which also concerns recent deaths, is in the form of a report, and no real attention is given to the corpses - which shows that this form of exchange was not common in traditional laments. In fact, in *Alc*. 393ff only the child mourns while Admetus' brief participation may indicate that he admits his responsibility for Alcestis' death (the boy's addresses to him may also include a tone of reproach).

Monologues

Unlike monodies and amoibaia between actors, monologues with threnetic character are distributed almost equally among the three tragedians, and also unlike monodies, which are delivered almost exclusively by female characters, here males and females have an equal share. In between the iambic trimeters of the monologues anapaests are sometimes interspersed,

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[15]Hermione's excessive behaviour involving demonstrative gestures as well is not justified, as the nurse states in 866ff. So Stevens (1971, on 825ff) argues that Euripides may be writing conventionally here, recalling other tragic laments.

[16]The only other instance of hexameter epirrhema in tragedy is *Phil*. 839-42.

denoting stronger emotion. So in *P.V.* 93-100 they express Prometheus' anguish about his suffering, before he composes himself in the following trimeters expressing his determination to bear his fate stoically. In S. *El.* 1160-62 anapaests are combined with an accumulation of interjections while in *Trach.* 1085-86 they express Heracles' passionate desire for death. One monologue, *Tro.* 790-98, is exclusively anapaestic, with marked signs of agitation, namely, employment of emotive words (790 μογερoῦ, 793 δύσμορε), questions typical in laments (792-93), exclamatory phrases (795-96), practice of ritual gestures (793-94), which is the only such case in these monologues. In *Trach.* 1046ff and *Phil.* 782ff other lyric metres are also employed (a dochmiac, bacchiacs and cretics respectively) to show the excessive pain and suffering of the two heroes (in the second case this effect is reinforced by an accumulation of interjections). In some monologues, or in the lines preceding or following them, there are references to their lamenting content, e.g. *P.V.* 99 πῆμα στενάχω, S. *El.* 1122 ξὺν τῇδε κλαύσω κἀποδύρωμαι σποδῷ, *Trach.* 1072 βέβρυχα κλαίων, *Heracl.* 445 κλαίω καὶ κατοικτίρω, *Herc.* 1394 δακρύων ἅλις.

In contrast to choral odes, monodies and amoibaia between actors, a great number of these monologues is prompted by a recent death: *Cho.* 743ff, *Aj.* 992ff, S. *El.* 807ff, 1126ff, E. *Supp.* 1080ff, *Herc.* 1340ff, *Tro.* 1156ff, *Bacch.* 1302ff, 1329ff, some of them being delivered over the bodies of the dead (*Aj.* 992ff, *Herc.* 1340ff, *Tro.* 1156ff, *Bacch.* 1302ff, 1329ff), and S. *El.* 1126ff over Orestes' supposed funerary urn. At first sight this seems to indicate that this form of lament for the dead was traditional,[17] but in tragedy in most cases where a death, recent or imminent, is lamented by means of a monologue instead of the more normal chorus-actor exchange, the circumstances concerning the death/burial are abnormal. So, for example, in S. *El.* 807ff and 1126ff Electra's lament for Orestes is undermined by the fact that he is alive, in the latter case being actually present. Teucer's lament for Ajax in *Aj.* 992ff is interrupted by the coryphaeus (1040ff) who points to the urgency of the situation to undertake action, since the problem of the burial of the corpse is at stake. Heracles' lament for his children and wife (*Herc.* 1340ff) is defective since, being their murderer, he is not allowed to perform the accustomed rites due to the dead (cf. his instructions to Amphitryon in 1360ff to bury and weep for them since ἐμὲ γὰρ οὐκ ἐᾷ νόμος). The lamentation for Pentheus in

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[17]Cf. the Homeric laments for the dead whose relation with these monologues I discuss below.

Bacch. 1302ff, 1329ff is delivered over his dismembered body, for which Agave is mainly responsible.[18]

Lamenting monologues allow for an extensive description of one's suffering, long digressions to the past or imaginable situations in the future or philosophical considerations. When a recent death is lamented, especially characteristic are personal details referring to the relationship between the bereaved and the deceased. So, for example, in *Cho*. 750ff the nurse describes her labours for Orestes while he was a baby; Iphis in E. *Supp*. 1099ff remembers Evadne's affection towards him; similarly, Cadmus in *Bacch*. 1318ff recalls Pentheus' reverence towards him. The shock of a sudden misfortune often prompts the sufferer to express general thoughts: so Cassandra (*Ag*. 1327ff) passes from her own situation to a lament for the fate of mortals in general, which, I think, more than anything else in her utterance justifies the application of the term θρῆνος to it (1322);[19] Iphis starts his monologue (E. *Supp*. 1080ff) with a philosophical consideration of youth and fatherhood, commenting later on the theme of old age (1108ff);[20] similarly, at the beginning of his monologue (*Herc*. 1340ff) Heracles expresses his thoughts on the nature of the gods.

The monologues concerning a recent death are those of the tragic laments most closely related to the Homeric γόοι. They are both spoken or close to spoken delivery (for the Homeric laments see p. 22), they are characterized by a relative calmness of spirit (in fact, the tragic monologues can be more agitated than the Homeric ones, as has already been pointed out) and they are addressed exclusively to the deceased, pointing to the personal relationship between him and the mourner. Therefore, Reiner's argument (1938, 10ff) that almost all tragic laments present certain similarities to the Homeric γόοι is over-simplified. He insists on the common themes they share, arguing that despite their artistic form they represent the traditional Greek lament for the dead. However, he does not take into account the differences in form, linguistic and stylistic features between the various forms of tragic lament and between them and the Homeric ones, and thus compares with the latter diverse passages such as *Ant*. 1261-1347, *Alc*. 393-415, E. *Supp*. 918-924. However, my detailed discussion of kommoi and the brief treatment of the other tragic lyric laments suggest that the Homeric γόοι had a minor influence on each of them, confined mainly to conventional *topoi* of lamentation. It is

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[18]For the perversion of funerary ritual in the last part of *Bacch*. see Segal (1994).

[19]For a discussion of Cassandra's final utterance in *Ag*. see Treu (1975), Bollack (1981).

[20]On the theme of lamentation over old age in tragedy see Byl (1975).

the tragic monologues for the dead, as I have shown, that are closer to the Homeric laments.

Dialogues

As in the case of the lamenting passages discussed so far, there is a greater number of dialogues with threnetic content in Euripides than in the other two tragedians. They are all in iambic trimeters with the exception of E. *El.* 1308ff, which is wholly anapaestic, and two other dialogues where trimeters give way to anapaests: *Med.* 1361-88/1389-1414 and *Bacch.* 1350-67/1368-87. This shift denotes a change to stronger emotional situation. So in the first passage the anapaests follow Medea's utterance containing the αἴτιον of this case (1378-88), indicating Jason's agitation as he learns that he will be deprived of the burial of his children (hence, his first anapaestic utterance is a curse against Medea). In *Bacch.* the anapaestic passage contains Cadmus' and Agave's farewell to each other and to their city, as exile is the only fate that awaits them. In *Phil.* 730ff a bacchiac and exclamations *extra metrum* are interspersed among trimeters reflecting the violent access of pain the hero experiences.

Stichomythia is a prominent feature in these dialogues: *Med.* 1361-77, 1393-96, *Hipp.* 1407-15, 1446-56, *Hec.* 417-31, *Herc.* 1140-45. The exchange in *Or.* 1022-55 is arranged in two-line utterances (distichomythia), kept throughout this passage (if we accept the deletion of lines 1024 and 1049-51, as in Diggle's text, 1994a). Antilabe is also frequent, e.g. *Aj.* 981-83, *Phil.* 733, 753-54, *O.C.* 1438-39, *Med.* 1397-98. The use of brief exchanges in these passages can be seen in relation to similar exchanges in kommoi, used to heighten tension. So the interruption of the coryphaeus' utterances by Teucer in *Aj.* 981-82 could well be part of a lyric dialogue, while these short exchanges allow antiphony as well, e.g. *O.C.* 1439-40 μή τοί μ' ὀδύρου - καὶ τίς ἄν σ'...οὐ κατάστενοι;, *Med.* 1363-64 ὦ τέκνα - ὦ παῖδες, 1370-71 οἵδ' οὐκέτ' εἰσί - οἵδ' εἰσίν, 1372-73 ἴσασιν - ἴσασι δῆτα (in the case of *Med.* each of the two speakers adjusts the words of the other to their own case, so as to accuse him). Self-references to lamentation are also frequent in these dialogues, e.g. *Aj.* 982 πάρα στενάζειν,[21] *Phil.* 736 ὧδ' ἀναστένων, *Med.* 1409

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[21]Cf. the similar phrases in *Tro.* 106, *Pho.* 1551 and their parody in Ar. *Wasps* 316.

τάδε καὶ θρηνῶ κἀπιθεάζω, *Herc.* 1141 σὰς καταστένω τύχας, *Or.* 1033 θανούμεθ'· οὐχ οἷόν τε μὴ στένειν κακά,[22] *Bacch.* 1372 στένομαί σε, πάτερ.

As in the case of monologues, these spoken exchanges may indicate that a full lyric lament is not appropriate because of the urgency or the abnormality of the particular situation. Characteristic are the cases of *Med.* 1361ff, E. *El.* 1308ff and *Bacch.* 1350ff, which present similar features. In all these dialogues, found at the end of the play, the wretched mortals mourn for their predicament while the *deus ex machina* (in *Med.* Medea performs this role on the chariot of Sun) remains untouched by human suffering, with the exception perhaps of Castor, who finally admits that he is moved by it (*El.* 1327ff).[23] Mourning is defective in all these cases, and therefore it is not a proper closure of the play: in *Med.* because Jason cannot obtain possession of his dead children, in *El.* and *Bacch.* because the mourners, being responsible for the death of their kinsmen, are urged by the gods to make their way into exile. Similarly, Theseus' mourning in the passages in *Hipp.* and Heracles' in *Herc.* 1140ff is abnormal because they are responsible for the death of their children.

Impact of pre-tragic laments on the tragic ones

Summarizing the impact of the Homeric and lyric laments on the tragic ones, each has influenced them in a different way according to their different nature. The Homeric laments, delivered by the relatives of the deceased, have influenced, accordingly, those in tragedy which give expression to personal grief. The *topoi* they employ are found in various kinds of tragic laments, but their form is recalled especially in the monologues for the dead. The lyric threnoi, delivered by an outsider and addressed to the relatives of the deceased, have influenced those tragic laments where the situation is similar, i.e. when the chorus try to console the mourner. Their more accepting, philosophical tone is also recalled in some threnetic odes as well as in some personal expressions of grief (monodies or monologues).

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[22]This statement points to the conventions of tragic lamentation: once death is close, mourning is expected. Similar, although not so explicit, are *O.C.* 1439-40.

[23]Cf. also Artemis in *Hipp.* 1396, who, though pitying Hippolytus, states that she is not allowed to weep for him.

Of the lyric threnoi, the pessimistic tone of those of Simonides is especially frequently recalled in the tragic laments since it suits the view of human life tragedy generally presents (cf. also other passages such as *O.C.* 1224-27, *I.T.* 475-78, E. fr. 449). By contrast, descriptions of the happy afterlife such as those the Pindaric fragments offer are completely absent from tragedy. We find, of course, the view that the dead are more fortunate than the living, having been released from the toils of life (see p. 116) but, despite that, tragic convention requires lamentation when death is close or has already happened (see n. 22 on the previous page). These opposing attitudes can be adopted even by the same person. So in *Tro.* 636ff Andromache is trying to console Hecuba (635 ὥς σοι τέρψιν ἐμβάλω φρενί) for Polyxena's death by arguing that her fate is better than that of herself, since she will be soon dragged to slavery. However, when she learns the decision of the Greeks to kill Astyanax, she cannot do otherwise but lament (740ff).

However diverse the Homeric and the extant lyric threnoi are and, consequently, their influence on different types of tragic laments, they are effectively combined in those kommoi where the mourner expresses his personal bereavement while the chorus try to comfort him. However, kommoi where both participants are united in grief may also have been influenced by popular lyric laments, which, in contrast to those of Simonides and Pindar, offered expressions of personal grief (see p. 34).

IV. ARISTOPHANIC PARODY[1] OF TRAGIC LAMENTATION[2]

The widespread use of lamentation in tragedy could not escape the notice of Aristophanes. His parody of lamenting scenes, as generally of other tragic scenes, may include parody of particular, identifiable passages[3] or general parody of the features of tragic lamentation without a specific reference.[4]

A representative example of the first case is the parody of Andromeda's monody preceding the parodos in *Andrmd.* in Inlaw's monody in *Thesm.* 1015-55. *Thesm.* is a highly parodic play, its second half consisting of an extensive parody of the means of escape found in *Palam.*, *Hel.* and *Andrmd.*, which Inlaw and Euripides adopt so that the first may be freed from the women who caught him spying on their plan to punish Euripides. After the device of *Hel.* has failed, Inlaw, bound to a plank by the Scythian archer, assumes the role of Andromeda while Euripides takes on the role of Perseus, who comes to release him.

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[1]In using this term one should be aware of its much-disputed definition and the many theoretical discussions about it: see, for example, Householder (1944), Dane (1988), Rose (1993). A term related to *parody* and sometimes difficult to separate from it is *paratragedy*: see Murray (1891), Kranz (1949), Rau (1967). More recently Silk (1993, 479) draws a clear distinction between the two terms as follows: "*paratragedy* is the cover term for all of comedy's intertextual dependence on tragedy, some of which is parodic, but some is not; ...*parody* is any kind of distorting representation of an original, which in the present context will be a tragic original." In this brief discussion (and elsewhere in my thesis) I am not concerned with such differentiations, so I will use the term *parody* without distinction.

[2]Below I will refer only to some representative examples while *passim* in the thesis I mention other cases as well.

[3]For a list of tragic passages parodied by Aristophanes see Rau (1967, 213-18).

[4]Rau (1967, 12-14) gives a detailed categorization of kinds of parody according to the nature of the original, e.g. whether it is a literary genre (like tragedy), a specific tragic scene or convention or motif...

Inlaw's monody is astrophic and presents great metrical freedom,[5] thus parodying the metrical pattern of Euripides' late monodies (see p. 129),[6] whereas Andromeda's solo was in anapaests, as is obvious from 1065-69, 1070-72 (frs 114, 115 Nauck, *TGF*), a metre frequent in monodies (see p. 129). Inlaw's monody includes recollection of the beginning of disaster (1022-23, 1043-46) and its attribution to some divine power (1047), drawing attention to his suffering (1029-33, 1048-49), exhortation to the chorus to lament for him (1034-36), wish for release through a sudden death (1050-51), all of which are themes common in tragic laments, here being applied to the case of Andromeda and Inlaw alike, so that comic effect is achieved by the shifting, often within a sentence, from one identity to the other and one gender to the other.

Inlaw starts his monody addressing the chorus as φίλαι παρθένοι (1015), thus recalling the frequent addresses to the tragic chorus as φίλοι/φίλαι, which is comic since here the chorus are neither maidens nor friends, and continues with the expression of the desire to escape from the present suffering (1016-17), also characteristic for tragic mourners (e.g. *Aj.* 404, *Hipp.* 877-78). Verses 1018-21 parody Andromeda's address to Echo, asking her to desist so that she can lament with her friends (fr 118 Nauck), which most probably came at the end of her monody,[7] while 1022-23 were addressed to Andromeda by the chorus (fr 120 Nauck). πολυπονώτατος (1023) is a characteristic tragic adjective, the phrase used here (πολυπονώτατον βροτῶν) being an exact echo of *Hec.* 721, while ἀπωλόμην (1025) parodies similar tragic phrases showing the utter destruction of the mourner (see pp. 95-96).[8] Verses 1029-31 parody the frequent references in tragedy to dances performed by young girls and the desire expressed by female characters while away from their homeland to participate in them (e.g. *I.T.* 1143ff). The pleasant activity of dancing is contrasted to the present misfortune (1032-33), thus recalling the usual theme of laments contrast between past - present. Lines 1034-35 recall another common theme of laments, contrast between

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[5]It consists of a combination of iambic, aeolo-choriambic, dochmiac, trochaic and dactylic cola. For a detailed metrical analysis see Zimmermann (1984-87, II. 7ff), Parker (1997, 436ff).

[6]This is also evidenced in the metrical elaboration of the monodies in *Birds* 227-62, *Frogs* 1331-63, the latter discussed below.

[7]The chorus most probably make their appearance with the question ποῖαι λιβάδες, ποία σειρήν (fr. 116 Nauck), asking about the reason of the lamenting cries they heard; thus the parodos takes the usual form of a chorus-actor exchange.

[8]Such phrases are frequently parodied by Aristophanes: cf. also *Clouds* 709, *Peace* 1013.

wedding expectations and the present misery (the phrasing is especially reminiscent of *Ant.* 813-16), in view of which Inlaw asks the chorus to lament for him (1036 γοᾶσθέ μ', ὦ γυναῖκες echoes *Tro.* 289). Other features of tragic laments parodied in this monody are the use of polyptoton (1037 μέλεα...μέλεος), anaphora (1043-44 ὅς ἔμ'...ὅς ἐμέ...),[9] exclamatory phrases pointing to one's misery (1038 ὦ τάλας ἐγώ, τάλας, for which cf. *Aj.* 981, 1047 ἰώ μοι μοίρας, 1048 ὦ κατάρατος ἐγώ, for which cf. *Andr.* 838-39) and accumulation of interjections (1042 αἰαῖ, αἰαῖ, ἒ ἒ). The wish of the sufferer to die through a violent, sudden death, coming towards the end of the monody (1050-51), results in a comic effect since at the last moment it is diverted from the person in misery to his enemy.[10] The idea that the sufferer does not want to live any longer or that it does not please him to look on the light of the sun (1052ff) is frequent in tragic laments (e.g. S. *El.* 821-22, *Alc.* 866-69, *Hipp.* 836-37).

The echo-scene following the monody (1056-97) is based on the similar one in *Andrmd.*, but serves to parody antiphonal lamentation in general (cf. 1059 ἀντῳδός characterizing Echo,[11] 1063 κλάειν - ἐπικλάειν[12]), which is effected by the exact repetition by Echo of Inlaw's words. So, for example, the imperatives οἴμωζε, ὀτότυζε (1081) parody those the leader of a dirge addresses to his partner, to which he consents, whereas Echo comically repeats exactly the same words. In fact, she is a nuisance since she does not let Inlaw continue his monody (cf. 1077 ἔασόν με μονῳδῆσαι). The exchange starts with iambic trimeters (1056-64) and continues with anapaests till the end (1065-97), first lyric (1065-72, which constitute part of Andromeda's actual monody: see p. 139) and then recitative. Anapaestic metre is widespread in tragic laments, parodied frequently by Aristophanes in such

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[9]For an extensive parody of anaphoric repetition as a characteristic of lamenting language cf. *Lys.* 962-64, *Clouds* 718-19, the latter most probably a close parody of *Hec.* 160-61.

[10]Such wishes are frequently parodied by Aristophanes. Cf. the extensive one in *Wasps* 323ff where the mourner, Philocleon, mentions several alternatives of violent death according to the tragic model, all of which, however, conclude in a comic way, and *Lys.* 972ff where Cinesias calls down a curse upon the person who is responsible for his suffering, which also concludes in an unexpected and comic way.

[11]For similar adjectives in kommoi see p. 83.

[12]The use of ἐπί here has probably the same function as in the Homeric formula ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες.

contexts, as in the anapaestic laments of *Clouds* 711-22, *Wasps* 324-33,[13] 750-59, and *Lys*. 954-79.

In *Frogs* 1331-63 Aeschylus attacks Euripides for his monodies, which he has already done earlier in the play (cf. 849 ὦ Κρητικὰς μὲν συλλέγων μονῳδίας),[14] in the context of the contest between them in Hades so that it may be decided which of the two is a better playwright. That this passage will imitate the style of Euripidean monodies in general without referring to a specific original is made explicit in the way it is announced (1330 τὸν τῶν μονῳδιῶν διεξελθεῖν τρόπον). The description of the metrical pattern of the monody is not definite since the colometry is uncertain in several places (cf., for example, the text printed by Stanford 1958, Dover 1993, Sommerstein 1996), but its elaboration[15] is certainly meant to recall that of Euripides' late monodies. In *Frogs* 1306, 1308 there is a reference to the Muse of Euripides, which the scholiast characterizes as ἐκλελυμένη (cf. 1314, 1349 εἰειει...λίσσετε, -λίσσουσα respectively), referring to the various modulations of his music.[16] One of the points of literary criticism directed against Euripides in *Frogs* is his habit of bringing οἰκεῖα πράγματα on stage (959), which resulted in his depriving tragedy of τὰ μέγιστα (1494-95). The content of the monody in 1331ff is an exemplifying case of this criticism: a woman of low social status narrates her ominous dream and is about to exorcize it by a ritual procedure, when she realizes that the disaster has already happened, her neighbour has stolen her cockerel. Comic effect is achieved by the contrast between the trivial matter and the lamentation in grand style.

The invocation of the Night and the description of the dream at the beginning of the monody is a close parody of *Hec.* 68ff. The address to the

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[13]The first part of the monody (317-23) is aeolic. MacDowell (1971, on 317-333) argues that the change in metre reflects change of mood: aeolics convey pathos, anapaests an urgent plea.

[14]The reason why he calls them Κρητικάς is not quite clear, but I am not interested in this point here: see Stanford (1958, on 849-50), Dover (1993, on 849), Sommerstein (1996, on 849). Euripidean monody is a constant target for Aristophanes. Another extensive parody of it is found in *Wasps* 317-333.

[15]According to Dover (1993, 359ff) at the beginning of the monody anapaests are dominant, then there is a shift mainly to dochmiacs (1335aff), which are taken up by dactyls (1338-39b), later aeolic rhythms predominate with some iambics (1340-52ab), while from 1353 onwards the metre is mainly iambic. The dochmiacs and iambics are frequently resolved, as often in tragic laments to denote agitation.

[16]Agathon was also famous for the employment of this kind of music whose 'bends and twists' are parodied in *Thesm.* 53 κάμπτει, 68 κατακάμπτειν τὰς στροφάς.

Night is a typical tragic invocation (e.g. E. *El*. 54, *Hec*. 68, *Or*. 174ff), parodied in *Thesm*. 1065ff as well, where it shows the isolation of the heroine, as similar apostrophes in tragedy do (see p. 93). Rau (1967, 132) suggests that the description of the dream "in black garments and murderous claws" (1336-37) points to the habit of mourners dressing in black and scratching their cheeks. Other features of this monody recalling tragic laments are the accumulation of anadiploses and the close repetition of emotive words in 1352-55,[17] the extensive asyndeton in 1331-37 and the repeated invocations in 1341-42 and 1344-45, where comic effect is achieved by the juxtaposition of the addresses to the sea-god and the housemates in the first case and of those to the Nymphs and the servant Mania in the second. Typically tragic is also the habit of the mourner of pointing to his misfortune, as in 1346 ἐγὼ δ' ἁ τάλαινα, 1355 ἁ τλάμων, with which the lament proper for the theft of the cockerel begins and concludes.[18]

The juxtaposition of the fortunes of Lamachus and Dicaeopolis in *Ach*. 1069ff puts forward in vivid terms the theme of war *versus* peace, which is central in the play, as the hard, stressful life of the first is contrasted to the care-free, joyous life of the second. The exploitation of tragic conventions in this scene serves to emphasize the comic effect of the parallelism. So the announcement of the frowning appearance of the first messenger (1069-70) prepares for the bad news he will reveal, according to the tragic convention (e.g. *Hipp*. 1151-52, *Pho*. 1332-34), while his exclamatory phrase announcing the troubles that await Lamachus (1071) begins in a typically tragic way, ἰὼ πόνοι (cf., similarly, *Sept*. 994, *Ant*. 1276), only to conclude with a comic word-play on Lamachus' name (καὶ μάχαι καὶ Λάμαχοι). Lamachus' reaction (1078ff) to the more detailed account of the messenger (1073-77) is clearly tragic, recalling the cases where lamentation is prompted by a messenger report. Each of his utterances starts with an interjection (1078 ἰὼ στρατηγοί..., 1081 οἴμοι κακοδαίμων[19]..., 1083 αἰαῖ· οἵαν ὁ κῆρυξ ἀγγελίαν...[20]), which Dicaeopolis takes up with antiphonal responses (1080 ἰὼ στράτευμα..., 1084 αἰαῖ, τίνα δ' αὖ...ἀγγελῶν;), making fun of him. His last utterance points to

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[17]ἄχεα κατέλιπεν (1353) seems to be an echo of E. *Supp*. 1156.

[18]Barlow (1986b, 10-12) examines in detail the parody of images, oxymora and repetitions of Euripidean monody in *Frogs* 1331ff. For the contrast between high and low see especially Silk (1993, 487ff).

[19]Lamachus attributes the same characterization to himself in 1094, in the tragic way of the adjective followed by ἐγώ (cf. also 1191 τάλας ἐγώ, 1207 στυγερὸς ἐγώ, μογερὸς ἐγώ).

[20]This phrase probably parodies *Aj*. 221-22 οἵαν ἐδήλωσας ἀνδρὸς αἴθονος ἀγγελίαν.

the arrival of the second messenger, who hurries Dicaeopolis to get ready for a dinner. The dialogue that follows between Lamachus and Dicaeopolis (1094-1142) makes remarkable use of antiphonal, symmetrical phrases,[21] an effect reinforced by their mostly one-line utterances, which are especially suitable to juxtapose, contrasting, the preparations of the two men for their different 'expeditions'.

In line 1174 a third messenger arrives announcing Lamachus' injury. The inconsistency between his account, i.e. that he was wounded by a stake as he was jumping over a trench (1178ff), and Lamachus' heroic one, that a javelin hit him (1193),[22] is comic. The clearly tragic phrasing of lines 1184-85 is comically subverted by the fact that they are addressed to an insignificant object, the feather of the helmet.[23] πανύστατόν σ' ἰδών (1184) and οὐκέτ' εἰμ' ἐγώ (1185) are identifiable tragic phrases (cf., for example, *Aj.* 858, *Alc.* 207-8 and *Phil.* 1217, *Hec.* 683 respectively). After the announcement of the disaster Lamachus appears on the stage lamenting, according to the tragic convention (cf. Oedipus in *O.T.* 1307ff, Heracles in *Trach.* 983ff, Hippolytus in *Hipp.* 1347ff). It seems that in this scene Aristophanes has in mind Hippolytus, who enters supported by male attendants (cf. Lamachus in 1214-15, 1222-23). Lamachus starts his lament in a typical way, with an interjection of grief (1190 ἀτταταῖ ἀτταταῖ),[24] finding particularly lamentable[25] the possibility that he may be mocked by his rival (1195-97), a theme common in tragic laments (see p. 199, n. 3). By contrast with Lamachus, Dicaeopolis enters accompanied by two girls and, echoing his initial interjection, points to the enjoyable time he is having with them (1198ff).

In the subsequent exchange between the two men (1204ff) Lamachus acts as a tragic hero in suffering, delivering typical exclamatory phrases (1204-5, 1207, 1210, 1212), asking his friends to take hold of him gently (1214-15,[26] 1222-23) and describing his suffering (1218-19, 1226),[27] whereas

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[21]For this scene see McLeish (1980, 129-30).

[22]Rennie (1909, on 1193) notices that the position of the preposition between substantive and attribute (δορὸς ὑπὸ πολεμίου) is in keeping with the paratragic style (cf. also *Clouds* 277, *Birds* 740, 742).

[23]This is the view generally accepted. Rogers (1910, 180, on 1184), however, suggests that ὄμμα refers to the Sun, in which case the absurdity of the address is spoilt.

[24]This interjection is common in comedy but rare in tragedy (found only in *Phil.* 790).

[25]For αἰακτός (1195), a clearly tragic word, see p. 87.

[26]Cf. *Hipp.* 1358-61, *Trach.* 1024-25 where the imperative πρόσλαβε (1025) may be parodied in *Ach.* 1215. The triple anadiplosis λάβεσθέ μου, λάβεσθε...προσλάβεσθ' (*Ach.* 1214-15) may be an

Dicaeopolis picks up his utterances, applying them to his own case and mocking Lamachus. The effect is especially remarkable as their short utterances allow for close antiphony[28] (cf., similarly, the exchange in 1097ff). So Aristophanes uses the form of exchange familiar in a tragic amoibaic threnos to stress the separate fortunes of the representatives of war and peace. The position of this scene at the end of the play and its metre, iambic with syncopations and resolutions, show that it is meant to parody in particular the amoibaic threnoi at the end of tragedies.[29] The play ends with Dicaeopolis' victory, as the chorus side with him despite their opposition to peace in its first half, and with Lamachus being isolated in his misery, thus reflecting the isolation tragic heroes exhibit in similar circumstances, so that the message of the play that peace is preferable to war finally triumphs.

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echo of *Aj.* 396-97 ἔλεσθ' ἔλεσθέ μ'...ἔλεσθέ μ' or of similar cases in tragic laments (e.g. *Ant.* 1321, E. *Supp.* 811).

[27]Cf. Heracles in *Trach.* 983ff and Hippolytus in *Hipp.* 1347ff *passim*. As the scholiast remarks on *Ach.* 1219, 1221, Lamachus θρηνῶν παρατραγῳδεῖ.

[28]For this scene see also Silk (2000, 125).

[29]For an association between the two see p. 177.

PART TWO: DRAMATIC FUNCTION OF INDIVIDUAL *KOMMOI*

I. AESCHYLUS

1. *PERSAE* 908-1077

The final kommos of *Pers.* constitutes the climactic scene of the play, as it resumes and intensifies themes dealt with in the previous scenes, fulfilling at the same time various expectations aroused earlier in the play. So the antiphonal lament between Xerxes and the chorus enacts vividly before the audience the predicted antiphonal lamentation between two Persian cities, expressed as a fearful possibility in the parodos (115-25). Xerxes' repeated exhortation to the chorus βόα νυν ἀντίδουπά μοι (1040=1048, 1066) recalls ἀντίδουπον ᾄσεται from 120,[1] while the interjection ὀᾶ anticipated in 117, 122, a Περσικὸν θρήνημα according to the scholiast on 116, is raised in earnest in the choral dirge of the first stasimon (570=578, 573=581), and prepares for the variety of interjections that will be heard in the exodos. Also, the anticipated tearing of the robes by the female population (123-25) is finally performed by the Persian elders in the great kommos. Throughout the play (cf. 121-25, 133-39, 537-45) emphasis is placed on the mourning of the Persian women, which, according to Hall (1996, on 121-2), "contributes to the overall impression of Asia as a 'feminine' continent." However, despite this preoccupation of the text, the only female character of *Pers.*, Atossa, does not express her grief in lyrics; instead, it is the chorus who repeatedly mourn for the Persian disaster (in the epirrhematic exchange with the messenger 256ff, in the first stasimon 548ff and in the final kommos 908ff).

Up to this point in the play the Persian defeat has been considered from the viewpoint of the chorus, the Queen, the messenger and Darius. Xerxes' appearance at last puts it in visible terms, as the picture of the ragged, humiliated king embodies the ruin of the whole nation, so it can be considered as a substitute for the 'action' which is missing from the plot.[2] This

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[1]This adjective denotes not only antiphonal singing, as more strictly ἀντίφωνον does, but also the resounding of the self-inflicted blows of mourning (δοῦποι): see Broadhead (1960, on 120-1), Hall (1996, on 120).

[2]Scholars have often criticized *Pers.* on these grounds (see some references in Broadhead 1960, xxxii; Anderson 1972, 166-67), since the catastrophe it presents does not evolve from the action on stage and therefore what is left is the contemplation and reactions of the *dramatis*

is made all the more emphatic since he does not utter any speeches like the other three *dramatis personae* but, unusually for a main character in tragedy, delivers lyric verses only, besides being the only solo voice in the play. The long-postponed arrival of Xerxes fulfils the expectations of the spectators for his appearance, which have been aroused in previous scenes. Already in 529-31 the Queen, before her first exit, suggests that Xerxes may arrive before she returns, and asks the chorus to relieve his distress. The spectators assume that his entrance is imminent, but they are frustrated when later she re-enters, making the preparations leading up to the appearance of Darius. Similarly, in 849-50 Atossa points to Xerxes' arrival: she states that the reason of her second exit is to fetch his royal robes and welcome him, an encounter which never takes place. These two passages have been much discussed and criticized for their 'inconsistencies'.[3] However, it is more likely that their purpose is simply to whet the expectations of the audience for Xerxes' arrival.[4] Atossa's absence from the final scene has also greatly puzzled scholars and has been variously explained.[5]

Xerxes' entrance is also prepared through his contrast with Darius, a majestic figure, regarded almost as a god, who never harmed his country (cf. 652-56, 663 ἄκακϵ, 855 ἀκάκας, 781). By contrast, Xerxes is presented as the embodiment of all the defeats, and he himself admits that (cf. 932-33 γᾷ τϵ πατρώᾳ κακὸν ἄρ' ἐγϵνόμαν).[6] This is not, of course, the historical reality, as presented by Herodotus,[7] but Aeschylus wanted to create a poetic atmosphere so that the audience would feel the extent of the present calamity more poignantly. So the third stasimon is a eulogy of Darius stating his

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personae to it; hence, it is generally considered as a drama simple and static in form (cf., for example, Fowler 1967, 1; Michelini 1982, 72).

[3]For a detailed discussion of them see Taplin (1977, 92ff), Thalmann (1980, 261ff).

[4]Cf. Dawe (1963, 29-30), Thalmann (1980, 266-67).

[5]For some interpretations see Broadhead (1960, xxxix, n. 1), Taplin (1977, 120-21), Dworacki (1979).

[6]As Hall (1996, 25) remarks, κακός and its cognates have a striking predominance throughout the play, and are also exploited, as seen in the above examples, to emphasize the contrast between the harmful Xerxes and the harmless Darius.

[7]Said (1981) compares the pictures of Xerxes and Darius given by Aeschylus and Herodotus showing that, although the historian stresses the continuity between past and present, the tragedian draws a line between them, giving an idealized picture of the past so as to emphasize Xerxes' responsibility. For other historical inaccuracies in Aeschylus see Conacher (1974a, 147-48).

achievements during his kingship, thus constituting an inverted lament and dominated by a nostalgic mood for the happy, old days[8] (cf. also the similar mood in 555ff, 584ff). So it stresses through opposition Xerxes' guilt and responsibility, and comes into sharp contrast with the rebukes with which the chorus welcome him. [9]

Xerxes' ragged appearance certainly constitutes an emphatic visual contrast to Atossa's splendid clothing on her first entrance (cf. 607-8),[10] Darius' royal attire (cf. 660-62) and the surely splendid dresses of the chorus as befitting their high rank (cf. 1060 πέπλον κολπίαν). It is generally agreed that Xerxes arrives on his chariot (cf. 1000-1), which would contrast his humiliated entrance with the first pompous one of the Queen as well as with the pompous description in the parodos of his Σύριον ἅρμα (84) and the numerous men he leads to war against Greece. Exceptionally, Taplin (1977, 123) argues, on the basis of line 913, that Xerxes enters on foot,[11] rejecting the evidence of lines 1000-1 about the chariot by taking them to mean that neither it nor Xerxes' attendants have returned (a forced reading of the text, I think). In this way, Taplin argues, the contrast between what set out and what has returned would be more emphatic. However, even on a chariot the rest of Xerxes' appearance would be enough to fulfil the above purpose.

Coming to the kommos itself now, its two distinct parts (908-1001, 1002-77) are differentiated in rhythm, structure and tone. The first starts with Xerxes' recitative anapaests (908-17), which continue in the first choral

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[8]The contrast between past - present, a common theme in laments (see pp. 115-16), is here adjusted to the comparison between Darius - Xerxes.

[9]Therefore, the scenes of Darius and Xerxes are interconnected by contrast, so criticisms such as "The final στάσιμον (852-906) does nothing to prepare us for the appearance of the King" (Broadhead 1960, xxxix) miss the point of the construction of the play. The opposition between father - son, central in *Pers.*, can be seen from the point of view of the influence of the father upon his children, which, as Caldwell (1970) shows, is one of the most important themes in the extant plays of Aeschylus.

[10]It is characteristic that in her second entrance Atossa appears without her royal robes and previous pomposity, which can be taken as a visual demonstration of Persia's downfall: see Sider (1983).

[11]However, it is reasonable to assume that Xerxes dismounts from his chariot as soon as he enters, in order to participate in the shared lament with the chorus. As Taplin (1977, 128) argues, we are to imagine both participants performing on the same level: "Even if there was a raised area for *Pers*, Xerxes would surely not have mounted it: the choreography of the antiphonal dirges and of the procession should be arranged around the actor."

utterance (918-21),[12] taken up by nine anapaestic lines (922-30) which present the characteristics of lyric anapaests, i.e. doricisms (928), resolution (930), wholly spondaic dimeters (922, 925, 928), absence of paroemiac, but are also distinguished from them by consistent diaeresis in mid-verse.[13] They are thus linked to what precedes but at the same time mark a transition to the lyric anapaests which start in line 931 and are arranged in three strophic pairs with each stanza shared between the two partners in single division. Anapaests make a strong appearance in the first strophic pair while in the second they are combined with a variety of other rhythms: Xerxes introduces ionics (950-51)[14] while the chorus respond with dochmiacs (955), choriambs (956), lecythia (957-58).[15] In the third pair the frequent occurrence among the anapaests of the iambic phrase ⏑ - ⏑ - - (in 974, 976, 977, 986) can be regarded, as Broadhead (1960, 317) remarks, as an anticipation of the iambics in 1002 onwards.

In the first part of the kommos Xerxes confronts the Persian elders, being the object of their criticism for the catastrophe he has caused. In a way they adopt the role Darius had asked them to undertake (829-31), although they rebuke Xerxes rather than admonishing him. Their outspokeness could be considered as inconsistent with the obedience and respect of the Persian subjects to their king and rather as a characteristic of the democratic Athens.[16] However, it is not altogether unnatural for the Persian nobles to criticize their king in this way. Their first outspoken criticism occurs in the first stasimon 550ff, where (584ff) they also express their fears for rebellion of the common people now that the power of the Persian empire has been ruined. Therefore their attitude towards Xerxes in this part of the kommos exemplifies the παρρησία they had foreseen would follow his failure (591ff).

Xerxes appears as a completely shattered man, beginning his part in the play with an exclamation of grief (ἰώ), blaming the Persian defeat on the

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[12]Broadhead (1960, 287) wonders whether these lines are delivered by the coryphaeus, in which case the distinction between the recitative and the subsequent transitional anapaests would be more emphatic.

[13]See Broadhead (1960, 287). For the peculiar nature of anapaests see p. 57.

[14]This rhythm, with clearly oriental associations (see Dale 1968, 124; West 1982, 124), has a striking predominance in the play (cf. esp. 65-114, 633-71).

[15]As regards the metrical analysis of the kommos, the solutions of the editors vary widely since text and colometry are not firmly established. For a detailed discussion of it see Broadhead (1960, 294ff), which I use in my analysis here, Dale (1937; 1983, 158ff).

[16]See Broadhead (1960, xxv-vi).

cruelty of fate and the god (909-12),[17] and expressing his feelings of guilt and humiliation before the representatives of the Persian nation (913-14), whom he does not have the courage to address directly, with the desperate cry τί πάθω τλήμων; (912) and the wish he had died together with the other warriors (915-17). The chorus welcome Xerxes' arrival with the interjection ὀτοτοῖ (that was also their reaction to the news brought by the messenger: cf. 268=274), mourning for the loss of στρατιά, τιμή, κόσμος ἀνδρῶν (918-20),[18] for which they, as Xerxes earlier, consider a divine power responsible (921). However, in the rest of their utterance (922-30) they accuse Xerxes directly of having crammed Hades with Persians[19] and having ruined the power of the empire: divine and human action go hand in hand, a key-theme throughout the play summarized in 742. This transitional anapaestic section (922ff) marks a rise in emotion, as is indicated by the slow and heavy movement of the spondees (cf. especially the wholly spondaic character of lines 922, 925, 928, with the striking prevalence of sounds α, αι in the first and last of them)[20] and the series of asyndetic predicates attributed to the lost Persians in 924-27.[21] It is also characterized by vivid imagery: it starts with the picture of a nation mourning for the loss of its manhood (922-23), which is repeated throughout the play (cf. 61-62, 548-49, 730),[22] and concludes with the picture of the land of

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[17]The idea of a malevolent divine power that has brought disaster upon the Persians is repeatedly emphasized throughout the play (see the extensive discussion by Broadhead 1960, on 345-6). The metaphor of a daemon falling upon a mortal, as in 911-12 δαίμων ἐνέβη Περσῶν γενεᾷ, is common in tragedy (cf., for example, *Pers.* 516, 942-43, *Ag.* 1175, 1468-69, *Ant.* 1272-74).

[18]Thalmann (1980, 274-75) analyzes in detail these three notions, remarking that they "represent slightly different ways of looking at a single entity-the Empire" (274).

[19]As Hall (1996, 21) remarks, the images of filling and emptying are recurrent throughout the play: the shores of Salamis are filled up with the corpses of the Persians (272-73, 421), the sea is filled up with wrecked ships and dead men (420), Asia is emptied by its men (118-19, 718, 730, 761).

[20]These sounds were a conspicuous characteristic of the Persian language, and are used in other choral passages as well (cf. 256ff, 633ff) as a means, among others, to create a distinctively oriental, non-Greek atmosphere: see Morenilla-Talens (1989), who also discusses the Aristophanic parody of these sounds. On the latter issue see also Colvin (1999, 287ff).

[21]For χώρας ἄνθος (925) cf. the similar phrases in 59-60, 252.

[22]If πενθητῆρος (946) is taken with πόλεως rather than with γέννας (for the different alternatives see Broadhead 1960, 229), we have once more the same motif. For an examination

Asia been brought to her knees (929-30), so that the effect of the catastrophe rises climactically, embracing first Persia and then the whole continent. In both cases, the earth that laments and the continent that kneels are virtually personified as women, which continues the image of the 'feminine' Persia/Asia, which is prevalent throughout the play.

The way the Persian elders welcome Xerxes, namely, by reminding him of his responsibility for the disaster, shows considerably less respect than their attitude towards either Atossa or Darius. Instead of prostrating themselves before him,[23] as they did before Atossa (152) and they probably do when they address Darius (694ff),[24] he most probably bends his knees before them (913).[25] Similarly, instead of the solemn words with which they greet Atossa (155ff) and the reverential, almost religious awe they exhibit before Darius, they greet his return with mourning cries. πρόσφθογγον (935) recalls προσφθόγγοις μύθοισι from 153-54, thus contrasting more emphatically the honorary titles addressed to Atossa with the wails welcoming Xerxes. Furthermore, there is no announcement for his entrance in contrast to the long one for hers (150ff).

The recitative, and probably the transitional anapaests, are delivered while Xerxes and the chorus are taking their position in the orchestra, so the kommos proper starts in line 931. The lyric anapaests open with Xerxes drawing attention to himself (931 ὅδ' ἐγών[26]), as he did in his first utterance (909 δύστηνος ἐγώ), this time viewing himself as the object of lament (931 αἰακτός), and admitting his responsibility (932-33). The rest of the first pair consists of a programmatic announcement of the intention of the chorus to sing a dirge (cf. the futures πέμψω, ἥσω, κλάγξω in 940, 944, 947 respectively), which is properly fulfilled in the second part of the kommos. The self-referential character of the first pair is marked by unanimity between Xerxes

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of the imagery of the play see especially Dumortier (1935), Fowler (1967, 1-10), Anderson (1972), Petrounias (1976, 1-32), Hall (1996, 21-22).

[23]For this characteristically oriental act before mortal superiors, which the Greeks regarded as particularly degrading, see Hall (1996, on 152). For other gestures of reverence in ancient Persia see Frye (1972).

[24]See Hall (1996, on 152 and on 694-702).

[25]See Taplin (1977, 123), who suggests that by doing so he embodies Asia, as it is depicted in the picture given by the chorus in 929-30.

[26]This is an ionic form found only here in tragedy, and for this reason it has aroused suspicion (see Broadhead 1960, on 931). Aeschylus uses several ionicisms in *Pers.* seeking to add local colour to his picture of the Persians. For a list of them see Headlam (1898, 189-90).

and the chorus (cf. his exhortation to them in 941 and their antiphonal reply in 944). I have discussed elsewhere (see pp. 82-83) the accumulation of adjectives used in this pair to describe the lamenting cries of the chorus as well as its striking verbal symmetry (p. 109), reinforced by the same metrical pattern (⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ -)[27] for the phrases κακοφάτιδα βοάν, κακομέλετον ἰάν, πολύδακρυν ἰαχάν. The emphasis placed on the ill-sounding, wearisome content of the lamenting cries of the chorus prepares for the wild, exotic interjections that will be heard in the second part of the kommos.

The chorus define them in the style of a Mariandynian mourner (938 Μαριανδυνοῦ θρηνητῆρος). The Mariandynians, who lived near the Euxine, were famous for their wild ritual dirges attested as late as first cent. B.C., which concerned the death of a youth called Bormos or Mariandynos, and had acquired a proverbial quality in later times (according to the scholiast their αὐλός was especially suited to dirges).[28] Aeschylus wanted to ensure a distinctively oriental, non-Greek atmosphere in this kommos, hence the references to oriental styles of mourning, first to the Mariandynian and later to the Mysian (1054).[29] According to the scholiast the Mysians and Phrygians were the people most abandoned in lamentation.[30] Whether these references to specific lamenting modes were distinguishable in the chorus' cries is not easy to say. Hall (1996, on 1054-5) notices that the response of the chorus to Xerxes' exhortation in 1054 consists of the same unusual word (1055 ἄνια) with which they first reacted to the messenger's news (256),[31] not attested outside this play, so it may have something to do with Mysian mourning (although this remains speculative).

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[27]This sequence, which is found several times in the kommos (933=943, 945, 973, 986=1001), can be scanned either as a dochmiac or as an anapaest. Dale (1937, 108ff) argues for the first, Broadhead (1960, 294) for the latter scansion, while Else (1977, 76 and n. 13) prefers to see it as having a more ambivalent (anapaestic/dochmiac) flavour.

[28]For the dirges of the Mariandynians see Broadhead (1960, 228), Alexiou (1974, 58ff), Hall (1996, on 935-40).

[29]In tragedy there are several references to laments that are barbaric/oriental in nature, whether they are performed by non-Greeks (cf. A. *Supp.* 69, *Cho.* 423ff, *Pho.* 1302ff, *Or.* 1383ff, 1395ff) or by Greeks (cf. *I.T.* 179ff). Aeschylus seems to have in mind a particular mode (i.e. Kissian, Mysian) while Euripides was thinking of the sound of the lament as asiatic-barbaric, as the references from his plays show.

[30]See Hall (1996, on 1054-5).

[31]This is the mss reading in both cases, which editors usually emend (Hall 1996, however, keeps it).

After the descriptive, self-referential character of the first pair, the following two constitute the narrative section of the lament (see pp. 116ff), adapted appropriately to the requirements of the play so as to represent the conflict between Xerxes and the chorus. In 950-54, a passage with dense images difficult to interpret,[32] Xerxes refers to the defeat the Persian fleet suffered at the hands of the Greeks, which prompts the chorus to deliver in four successive stanzas a list of names of Persian leaders inquiring about their fate. Although Xerxes began the strophe with a new theme, thus taking the lead, he is now found in the position of replying to the chorus' questions, having but little to say. This list of names picks up by ring composition the catalogue of the departed leaders given in the parodos (21-52), only to contrast the splendour of that list conveyed in the use of many attributes and highly descriptive language with the feelings of failure and desolation reflected in the bare listing of names in this final catalogue. A similar mood is reflected in the catalogue of the dead delivered by the messenger (302-30), where he gives a horrifying picture of the manner of their death.[33]

However, in this final scene the delivery of the names has a direct bearing on Xerxes, since he is responsible for the disaster, and makes his feeling of guilt deeper, as he is forced to reply to the reproachful questions of the chorus (cf. the relentless anaphoric repetitions of πού in 956-57, 966-68).[34] The leaders mentioned by the chorus were Xerxes' friends (956 φίλων ἄλλος ὄχλος), comrades (957 παραστάται, 989 ἑτάρων) and close collaborators (978-79)[35] or distinguished commanders (1002 ἀγρέται στρατοῦ), so their death

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[32]For a discussion of it see Broadhead (1960, on 950-4).

[33]As Anderson (1972, 169) remarks, these three passages serve "to reinforce the developing emotional tone of the play, from a proud confidence in Persia's might..., through appalled horror at the sudden devastation of Persian manhood, to the final, woeful understanding of the full extent of the disaster which Xerxes has wrought upon his nation." Striking during the delivery of all three catalogues would certainly be the acoustic effect of barbarian names, which, as Hall (1989, 118) remarks, has no exact parallel in extant tragedy. For the problem of the historical existence of these leaders and the authenticity of the names as Persian see Broadhead (1960, App. V: 318-21), Hall (1989, 77-78).

[34]The δέ following πού in all these lines reinforces the reproachful tone of the questions, conveying "a note of surprise, impatience, or indignation" (Broadhead 1960, on 956-61). Alexiou (1974, 84-85) shows that repeated anaphoric questions with πού were traditional to laments for cities, referring, *inter alia*, to an anonymous tragic fragment (372 Nauck) lamenting the fall of Persia, where these questions are answered in the last line.

[35]For the title/position of that person see Broadhead (1960, on 978-84), Hall (1996, on 979).

was especially sorrowful for Xerxes himself and the chorus. Broadhead (1960, 320-21) argues that the fact that the majority of the names are, or were meant to be, Persian, indicates that there is a narrowing of interest from the first and second list, where the leaders of several nations are mentioned, to the third one, which focuses exclusively on the fate of the Persians. The number of names, greater than in the other two catalogues, serves to show the complete disaster that has befallen the Persian nation.

The questions of the chorus are especially pressing for Xerxes in the first two stanzas (cf. 973), thus he answers them, but in the third one the Elders, having seized fully the magnitude of the calamity, answer for themselves (985-86),[36] while in their last utterance they do not question him any longer, but simply express in a resigned mood their longing for a number of other Persians, sure that they have perished as well. The feeling of loss felt throughout the catalogue of the dead is stressed with the use of the same verb: λιπών (961), ἀπέλειπον (962), ἔλιπες ἔλιπες (985), in its repetition in the latter case sounding like a despairing cry.

In his first two responses to the chorus Xerxes gives brief narrative accounts of the manner of death of his comrades. In 962-65 he gives the description of Persians falling from their ships and dying on the shores of Salamis, both themes emphasized by the messenger.[37] The general sense of loss is emphasized by the use of ὀλοούς, ἔρροντας, θείνοντας, as in his previous utterance by ἀπηύρα, κερσάμενος (for the last one cf. 921 ἐπέκειρεν), while the gloomy atmosphere is complemented with the description of ἀκτᾶς as στυφελοῦ[38] (cf. in the corresponding strophe δυσδαίμονα ἀκτάν and the ominous associations evoked by νυχίαν πλάκα[39]). Xerxes' next description (977) is that of the Persians gasping like the dying fish (a picture made vivid with ἀσπαίρουσι).[40] In his third response Xerxes does not give narrative

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[36]Broadhead (1960, on 985-6) suggests that Xerxes answers the question of the chorus by a nod or a pained silence, which would in itself be self-explanatory (cf. 986 λέγεις), hence the exclamation of the chorus ὤ ὤ ὤ (985).

[37]For the picture of Persians being hurled from their ships cf. 305, 313, for the picture of them dying on the shores 272-73, 303, 421.

[38]Cf. 303 στύφλους παρ' ἀκτάς. ἐπ' ἀκτᾶς (965) repeated after ἐπ' ἀκταῖς in the previous line has aroused suspicion. If it is not an error, the repetition most probably denotes pathos: see Broadhead (1960, on 962-73).

[39]For this unusual expression see Broadhead (1960, 230).

[40]Cf. 424-26 where the Persians, struck with oars and spears by the Greeks, are compared to fish in a net.

accounts of the death of his comrades any longer, since the chorus had already anticipated his answer (cf. 986 κακὰ πρόκακα λέγεις).[41] Instead, he expresses his passionate yearning for them (988-89), a theme which the chorus pick up immediately afterwards in ποθοῦμεν (992).[42]

The second and third pairs of the kommos can be paralleled with the exchange between the messenger and the chorus (249ff) in that in both cases the actor gives the cue for the exchange by referring briefly to the disaster, to which the chorus react and, as a consequence, the actor responds to their comments. The parallelism between the two scenes can be also traced in the fact that neither actor reports in his last utterance but, instead, expresses his emotional state, thus giving the cue for the next choral statement. It is characteristic that in this play with its simple plot, where there are no open confrontations between characters, the only conflictive element is incorporated in the framework of the kommos, thus advancing its dramatic quality. So this part has a dynamic character in contrast to the more static one of the section that follows.

In the second part of the kommos (1002 onwards) iambics are combined with some other rhythms, i.e. pherecrateans (1022-24), choriambs (1007, 1016-20, 1045), anapaests (1075, 1076), dochmiacs (1073, 1076, 1077). It is reasonable to assume that the metrical simplicity of this part of the kommos, accompanied by simplicity in language as well, in comparison with the elaboration of the first part, serves to let the spectators' attention be occupied wholly by its striking visual effect, in particular the demonstrative gestures in 1038ff. The form the lament takes from this point onwards must reflect the characteristic features of a traditional ritual kommos with Xerxes leading the dirge (see pp. 59-60). Through repetition of the same words or phrases agreement between the two partners is achieved. The chorus do not reproach Xerxes any longer, but consent to his words. They sympathize with him now and treat him as a sufferer rather than as the cause of the disaster, as before.

The fourth pair exhibits remarkable signs of antiphony. Here Xerxes brings to an end the mournful catalogue of the dead with one word, βεβᾶσι (1002), describing thus in a categorical and unequivocal way their lot. Similarly, the chorus' agreement (1003 βεβᾶσιν) followed by νώνυμοι - an

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[41]Hall (1996, on 990-91) remarks that, unusually, Xerxes picks up the chorus' diction here (cf. 990 πρόκακα λέγων) whereas in the rest of the kommos he takes the lead introducing new language and ideas, so she suspects that the attribution of the lines may not be authentic.

[42]The longing for the departed men has been stressed in the parodos as well (cf. 61-62 οὓς...πόθῳ στένεται μαλερῷ).

obvious contrast after the extensive lists of names - erases them at once in their thought, which is a presupposition for the unanimity between them and Xerxes in this part of the kommos. The antiphonal effect is repeated in the corresponding lines of the antistrophe with a verb in the perfect tense as well (1008, 1009 πεπλήγμεθ'), [43] the first time in the kommos that Xerxes uses the first person plural. Characteristic in the play is the repeated use of perfects, which signify "not only the totality of the Persians' commitment to the expedition against Greece but also the utter finality of the results."[44] The strophe concludes with a reference to the gods' responsibility for the unexpected disaster,[45] and in particular to the god-sent delusion (1007 Ατα). This is a key-theme in the parodos (93ff), taken up in the chorus' address to Xerxes as μεγάλατε (1016)[46] and in their subsequent phrase ἄταισι ποντίαισιν (1037). In the corresponding part of the antistrophe (1011-12) the chorus refer to the human agent of their defeat, the Greek sailors, so in this pair the recurrent theme of the collaboration of divine and human action is symmetrically stressed.

In the fifth strophic pair the subject changes from the disaster at sea to the pitiable spectacle of Xerxes with his rent robes, deprived of his arms and unaccompanied by his comrades. Although some scholars have taken στολᾶς (1018) to mean the remainder of his attendants, it must certainly refer to his robes.[47] Indicative of that is also the fact that in the corresponding line of the antistrophe (1030) he refers to his action of rending them. Xerxes' concern about his appearance is certainly strange, especially after he has lamented the loss of his great host (1014-15), but, as the majority of modern scholars agree, the concern about costly dress, which is repeatedly emphasized throughout the play, has a symbolic meaning: when it is unharmed it indicates that the Persian power is intact whereas its rending

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[43]The metaphorical use of this verb is very common in tragedy (e.g. *Pers.* 1015, *Cho.* 31, *Alc.* 405, 856), hence its parody in Ar. *Thesm.* 179 ἐγὼ δὲ καινῇ ξυμφορᾷ πεπληγμένος.

[44]Avery (1964, 176). For the use of such perfects in other lamenting passages, frequently used in anaphora in asyndetic structure, see also E. *Supp.* 1138-39, *Tro.* 582, *Or.* 971.

[45]For ἄελπτον κακόν (1006) cf. πῆμ' ἄελπτον (265, 1026).

[46]Hall (1996, 99) translates "man of great calamity". For a detailed discussion of this unusual reading see Broadhead (1960, on 1014-16).

[47]See Broadhead (1960, on 1017), Thalmann (1980, 272, n. 37), Hall (1996, on 1016-18).

marks the ruin of the empire.[48] Already before Xerxes appears emphasis has been placed on his tattered garment by Darius (832ff) and Atossa (845ff), who thus direct the expectations of the audience concerning his appearance. Xerxes' action of tearing his robe is foreshadowed in Atossa's dream (199), and is narrated in turn by the messenger (468), Darius (834-36) and finally himself (1030). In his figure we witness the most extreme and representative example of the Persians' tearing of their clothes in distress, which is only a verbal image in 123-25 and 537-38, but is enacted with particular intensification by the chorus at the end of the play.

Throughout the play Aeschylus stresses the antithesis between the Greek and Persian military tactics (especially sea- vs. land- battle), with specific emphasis on the contrast between the Greek spear and the Persian bow,[49] which, as Gow (1928, 156-57) shows, from a consideration of historical evidence, is over-simplified. However, as Hall (1989, 86) notes, "Aeschylus is creating a poetic discourse by which to define the difference between barbarian and Greek, and in the victory of the spear over the bow he is using a conceptual shorthand which enables him to reduce history to accessible symbolic form", which reaches its climax with the attention he draws to Xerxes' quiver.[50] With his tattered garment, his empty quiver and deprived of his faithful comrades (insistence on the latter is placed in the final, corresponding lines of the pair: 1024=1036[51]), Xerxes embodies the Persian defeat in the best possible way.

From 1038 onwards the kommos abandons any narrative themes, focusing exclusively on threnodic language *per se*, which consists of inarticulate cries and interjected phrases, and on the description of gestures of self-infliction. So, whereas up to this point Xerxes and the chorus exhibit their dramatic personality, from now on their roles are purely formal and thus less

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[48]Cf. Avery (1964, 179ff), Holtsmark (1970, 21), Thalmann (1980, 268ff). As Thalmann (1980, 272) argues, indicative of this association is that Xerxes points to his empty quiver (1020ff) immediately after his robe.

[49]See Petrounias (1976, 29), Hall (1989, 85-86). The defeat the Persian bow has suffered is also emphasized in *Pers*. 268ff, 278.

[50]As Bacon (1961, 3) puts it, "the reference to its emptying makes it part of a complex of symbols of outpouring, squandering, draining." Similarly, Taplin (1977, 127) suggests that it symbolizes the way Persia has been emptied.

[51]Hall (1996, on 1036) comments on the funeral overtones of προπομπός (1036), especially when the word is found in a threnetic context. In this case all Xerxes' escorts are dead, so the chorus will undertake his processional escort.

revealing. This new shift of emphasis is accompanied by the arrangement of the chorus in a new formation (perhaps around or behind Xerxes), as they are prepared for their final processional movement out of the theatre, which is marked by Xerxes' exhortation πρὸς δόμους δ' ἴθι (1038), repeated in the epode (1069 ἐς δόμους κίε).[52] δόμοι may mean either the houses of the Elders or the palace. Avery (1964, 182, n. 18) prefers the first, suggesting that line 1071 may indicate that Xerxes is dispersing the chorus through the city by sending them home. However, it would be more appropriate that they escort him to the palace, as Atossa had instructed them to do (530 προπέμπετ' ἐς δόμους),[53] in which case κατ' ἄστυ may imply that the chorus need to cross the city on their way to the palace.[54] In any case this procession would resemble, in the intensity of emotional extravagances that accompany it, a funereal one. However, the dead cannot have a proper funeral, since they were left unburied at Salamis, so in the person of the ruined king the chorus would seem to perform the funeral procession of 'Persia' itself.

In this part of the kommos Xerxes is in complete command of the situation. His role as the leader of the dirge, which started formally in 1002ff, is now strengthened, as is indicated in the multiple imperatives he addresses to the chorus (see p. 94). So now he seems to 'regain' the power he lacked in the first part of the kommos, where he was subject to the criticism of the chorus. However, Xerxes is the leader of the θρῆνος from the beginning (despite his seeming weakness) from the point of view that he gives the musical and narrative cues which the chorus develop or comment on, but from 1038ff the kommos gains a more ritual character, so his leading role becomes prominent. Here the obedience of the chorus to Xerxes is emphasized in their address to him as δέσποτα (1049), which is the attribute they apply to Darius (cf. 666 δέσποτα δεσποτᾶν). In this final part of the kommos Xerxes exhorts the chorus to deliver cries of mourning and perform gestures of self-infliction (see p. 118), which they execute responding

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[52]Taplin (1977, 128) argues that the preparation for the final formation starts at 1038, but the actual procession seems to start at or soon after 1066.

[53]See Taplin (1977, 128).

[54]See Hall (1996, on 1071-2). The question where the action of the play takes place is a complex one, and I will not attempt to deal with it here. See the discussions by Broadhead (1960, xliii-xlvi), Taplin (1977, 103-7), Hall (1996, on 140-1).

accordingly.[55] The effect of this passage must have been powerful, especially as it contrasts emphatically the stately Elders of the parodos with the pitiable sight they present in the exodos. The quicker pace of the kommos in this part is heightened by the intensification of its kinetic and visual aspects from 1038 onwards.

The dancing movements of the chorus, which, unfortunately, cannot be recovered, would have contributed to the extraordinary overall effect.[56] A possible reference to them is to be found in ἁβροβάται (1073). Although compound adjectives with ἁβρο- are used elsewhere in the play (41, 135, 541, 543) to describe the luxury of the Persians,[57] the force of this compound in 1073 is probably more than a reference to the soft steps of the chorus:[58] according to Bayfield (1904, 163) it suggests "posturing and the performance of certain conventional movements of a *refined and artistic* nature by the mourners as they move off."[59] Another reference to a dancing movement in *Pers.*, although it is not clear in which part of the play it occurs, is found in Ar. *Frogs* 1028-29, where Dionysus says that he particularly enjoyed the hand-clapping of the chorus in *Pers.* while they cried ἰαυοῖ. There is no such cry in *Pers.*, but the closest to it is ἰωά (1071, 1072), so it is reasonable to suppose that the hand-clapping takes place in the final kommos or at least in the reperformance to which Aristophanes presumably refers.[60] Finally, Hall

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[55]It is also possible that the cry ὀτοτοτοτοῖ in 1043 (and probably the corresponding one in 1051) is delivered by Xerxes and the chorus in unison, as ὁμοῦ τιθείς (1042) suggests. See Broadhead (1960, on 1042-3), Hall (1996, on 1042).

[56]For a detailed discussion of the dancing movements of the tragic chorus, with references *passim* to that of *Pers.*, see Lawler (1964, 22-62).

[57]Kelley (1978-79) remarks that compounds with specific elements (some of them are ἁβρο-, -ανδρος, ἱππο-, τοξο-, χρυσο-) occur repeatedly in *Pers.*, some of them found only in this play. It is also noticeable that the number of descriptive epithets in it is greater than in any other Aeschylean tragedy (see Earp 1948, 54ff). For a detailed discussion of the use of the ornamental epithet in Aeschylus see Bergson (1956, *passim*).

[58]In tragedy the softness of steps is usually applied to female or effeminate male barbarians: see Hall (1996, on 1073).

[59]He argues (162-63) that, similarly, the element ἁβρο- in the compounds ἁβροπενθεῖς (135), ἁβρόγοοι (541) denotes the artificial elaborations of Asiatic mourning, and not tenderness or abandonment in grief.

[60]Stanford (1958) emends the text so as to refer to this part of the play, suggesting (on 1028-9) that Aristophanes has deliberately distorted this cry so as to give a barbaric effect or that

(1996, 21, on 1046) makes the interesting suggestion that the choice of the verb ἐρέσσω (1046) to denote the self-inflicted movements of the chorus is especially appropriate in this play concerned with a sea-battle, speculating that they would be strongly suggestive of the rowing movements of the sailors at Salamis.[61]

Characteristic is also the acoustic effect produced by the repetition of interjections throughout the kommos, which is intensified in the epode with their striking accumulation there. As Scott (1984, 156) suggests, "at the end of the play the Persian elders are so exhausted or overcome with mourning that they cannot continue a formal ode and they leave the stage with cries of unorganized mourning. Such a conclusion strengthens the impression of Persia's debilitating disorder...and consequent decline." The great variety of interjections in this kommos, greater than in any other lamenting passage in extant tragedy, with two of them (ἰωά, ἠὴ ἠή) found only in *Pers.* (see p. 91), and their frequent occurrence especially in its second part, with a remarkable accumulation in the epode, would have struck the audience as oriental, and seem to have made a particular impression on them, since Aristophanes recalls these cries in *Frogs* 1028-29.

Xerxes' final utterance in the kommos (1075-76)[62] is a recapitulation of the naval disaster, so it fittingly concludes his part in it. The term he uses for ships in 1076, βάρισιν (cf. also 553), is a foreign word, used to give an exotic colour to his description.[63] The last choral utterance (1077) also resumes themes suggested earlier in the kommos: πέμψω is recalled from 940 in the context of the chorus' welcoming of Xerxes' return[64] while δυσθρόοις

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possibly the chorus in *Pers.* pronounced ἰωά very much like ἰαυοῖ. For the view that this gesture occurred in the Darius-scene see Sommerstein (1996, on 1028 and 1029).

[61]For the use of this verb in a lamenting context imitating rowing movements cf. *Sept.* 855, also in the form of a self-exhortation by the chorus.

[62]Hall (1996, on 1075-6) finds suspicious the interruption of the line-by-line alternation of the two participants and prefers to give line 1076 to the chorus, arguing that a subsequent command by Xerxes to escort him home, to which the chorus reply in their final utterance, has dropped out. For a different view see Broadhead (1960, on 1066-76).

[63]For a discussion of it see Broadhead (1960, on 550-53). For foreign vocabulary in Aeschylus see Kranz (1933, 81ff), Stanford (1942, 50ff), who remarks that it is especially accumulated in *Pers.* and *Supp.*, which indicates that this was one of Aeschylus' devices for characterizing foreign people.

[64]Hall (1996, on 1078) also remarks that it "is possibly intended to pick up the notion of a quasi-funeral procession from line 1036."

γόοις recalls the δύσθροον αὐδάν (942) he asked them to raise. Thus the phrasing of the epode recalls by ring composition the programmatic first pair of the kommos (cf. also αἰακτός in 931 and 1069). The promises given there have now been accomplished, so the chorus escort Xerxes into the palace fulfilling Atossa's injunctions (1077 πέμψω also recalls προπέμπετ' from 530), not, however, in consolation, as she had instructed them (530 παρηγορεῖτε), but in unrelieved lamentation. The open ending of the play suggests that the atmosphere of mourning is to be continued, and I do not think that it provides any evidence to suppose that "Xerxes has been supported and comforted, and that a new life as king (and new clothing) await him in the palace."[65] Rather the opposite seems to be true. As Taplin (1977, 128) suggests, "Xerxes' total involvement in the procession, as in the lament, shows him as a shattered man."

The final scene of the play has often puzzled scholars, and its interpretation is closely related to the interpretation of the play as a whole.[66] Few scholars nowadays would see *Pers.* as a patriotic eulogy of the victory of the Greeks (or only the Athenians), as commonly in the nineteenth century, when the final scene was often viewed as a means to ridicule Xerxes. Such an interpretation arguably deprives it as well as the play as a whole of the tragic tone and the universality that should normally characterize a tragedy and denies Xerxes the characterization of a tragic hero. However, as Broadhead (1960, xxiii) argues: "This final scene can be understood and appreciated only if we recognise that Xerxes, unsuitable as he was for the role of traditional tragic hero, is nevertheless the mainspring of the tragedy." Hall (1989, 71) also refers to the view that the chorus can be seen as a collective tragic 'hero' in as far as they represent the unfortunate Persian people. According to this interpretation Aeschylus means his audience to sympathize with the Persians by describing fully the extent of their misery. Taking this argument further, it is reasonable to suppose that he intends to draw their emotions to the pathos he exhibits, so that in the suffering of the Persians they could see the fall from prosperity to destruction of a fellow-people, in whose position they could be found as well. This interpretation is in accordance with the view supported by most modern scholars, which emphasizes the universality of human fate.[67]

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[65]Gagarin (1976, 42).

[66]For the two main trends of interpretation of *Pers.*, which I discuss briefly below, see Hall (1989, 71-72; 1996, 16-17).

[67]For an extensive discussion of the final scene of *Pers.* in this light see Pelling (1997, 13ff).

A striking characteristic of this kommos is its length (it is the second longest in extant Greek tragedy after the great kommos of *Cho.*), which perhaps makes it monotonous for modern spectators (especially the part in 1038ff). Certainly, however, its appeal was not the same for the ancient ones, for whom similar lamenting scenes were part of their everyday experience. In fact, its great length was an additional means together with the various others I have discussed to characterize the Persians as Orientals. Similarly, it is performed by a chorus of males, which is not the case in any other extant Greek tragedy, and we may doubt whether Aeschylus would have allowed a Greek male chorus to behave in this way. Tragedy presents males indulging in grief (see p. 19), but mostly as individuals; by contrast, female choruses often exhibit a similar behaviour, whether they are Orientals (e.g. *Cho.* 23ff, 423ff, *Tro.* 1307ff, *Pho.* 1350ff) or Greeks (cf. E. *Supp.* 71ff, 826ff).[68] The use of female, foreign choruses was especially appropriate for the staging of lamenting scenes since extremes of mourning were considered by the Greeks as a sign of barbarism and femininity (see p. 18). No doubt, then, Aeschylus meant to characterize the Persians as Orientals and effeminate, and so luxuriating in grief and lacking in self-control (notably, in no other lament performed by foreigners is the ethnic colour emphasized to such an extent). This picture of them is, then, in accordance with the picture of Asia repeatedly presented in the play as feminised.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that the kommos of *Pers.* would have struck an Athenian audience as typically oriental, it is almost certain that they would have recognized in it their own dirges for the dead. In other words, Aeschylus presents the essential characteristics of a traditional Greek lament under the cover of orientalism. The fact that he permits on stage behaviour that was seemingly discouraged by society shows that despite the attempts of the state to control excessive lamentation, it remained firmly embedded in the Greek soul and thus not necessarily seen under a negative prism. Rather the attitude of the spectators towards the kommos of *Pers.* would have been more ambivalent, in the sense that, although they may have disapproved of its great length and extravagance as 'oriental', they would most probably have welcomed these features as an unrestrained version of the practices of their own society and as a licence to enjoy in the theatre what they could not practise in real life.

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[68]For evidence of laments performed by eastern choruses or characters in tragic fragments see Hall (1989, 131-32).

2. *SEPTEM CONTRA THEBAS* 875-1004

The kommos of *Sept.* constitutes, like the final one of *Pers.*, the culmination of the play, as it, likewise, comes at its end picking up in a powerful and complex way themes introduced in previous scenes. Its discussion is also closely related to some of the most important issues of the play, namely, the participation or not of the sisters in the lament and the problem of the authenticity of its end (1005-78), so I will inevitably have to take them into account in the course of my subsequent analysis.

The first reaction of the chorus to the news of the mutual killing of Eteocles and Polyneices is given in the third stasimon of the play (832-47) preceding the kommos. Their initial hesitation in the anapaestic introduction to the ode[1] whether they should celebrate the salvation of the city or weep for the death of the brothers (825ff πότερον χαίρω κἀπολολύξω...ἤ...κλαύσω...) is soon resolved, as the much longer and more elaborate clause referring to the fate of the brothers clearly suggests that their song will be a lament.[2] Their concern with the doom of the brothers rather than civic success is in accordance with the gradual shift of emphasis in the course of the play from the fortunes of the city to those of the house of Laius. Already in this anapaestic introduction the chorus attribute the same characterizations to both brothers (827ff), thus blurring the distinction emphatically drawn in the earlier part of the play between the good brother, defender of his city, and the bad one, its attacker, which is a constant theme in the subsequent kommos.

Of particular importance towards that direction is the attribution to both brothers of the adjective πολυνεικεῖς (830), 'producing many quarrels', in a word-play on the name of Polyneices. An etymology of his name was given by Amphiaraus (577-78) and by Eteocles himself (658 ἐπωνύμῳ δὲ κάρτα, Πολυνείκη λέγω, which is recalled in 829-30) while its application to Eteocles was prepared by the chorus in 677-78, while they were trying to prevent him from fighting with Polyneices: in his eagerness to do so he is very much like him. The etymology of the names of the two brothers is

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[1]For anapaestic preludes to the Aeschylean stasima see p. 128, n. 3.

[2]Page (1972, in his *apparatus criticus*) and Dawe (1978, 88-89) suggest along with Verrall that these anapaests may be spurious, but, as Brown (1976a, 9, n. 11) argues, it would indeed be strange if the chorus started their dirge straight away without taking into account the news of the city's safety.

particularly important in the play.[3] The name of Eteocles is not properly etymologized, as is that of Polyneices, but we can trace a word-play on it in 923-25, where the chorus state that both brothers indistinguishably won fame in battle. Hecht - Bacon (1974, 14-15) suggest another possible meaning of Eteocles, 'the one truly bewept' (from κλαίω). Although this is not etymologically justified (κλεής is not related to κλαίω), a certain association between Eteocles' words and the motif of lamentation seems to be intended in the play. At its beginning he predicts that if things do not go well in the city (which, however, finally do), he will be "hymned in mourning" (6-8 'Ετεοκλέης...ὑμνοῖθ'...πολυρρόθοις οἰμώγμασιν), thus anticipating in a way the mixture of praise and lamentation his corpse receives in the final lament.[4] Eteocles has tried to silence the lamenting voices of the chorus and he does not allow weeping even when he realizes that he will have to confront his brother in a single combat (656), but his attempts are finally proven unsuccessful, as the choral lament over his and Polyneices' bodies shows.[5]

The metre of the third stasimon, iambic throughout, continues into the following astrophon (848-860)[6] and the kommos, so that the metrical affinity of these pieces reinforces the lamenting mood pervading them. Most of the themes dealt with in the third stasimon are also picked up in the subsequent exchange. So the strophe opens with a reference to the fulfilment of Oedipus' curse (832-33),[7] which corresponds to the opening of the antistrophe (840-41),[8] and is also a recurrent theme in the kommos (cf. 885-86, 945-46). It continues with a description of the lament of the chorus in Dionysiac terms (cf. especially θυιάς in 836, which suggests abandonment to passionate emotion), which is in accordance with other cases of tragic mourners described with language associated with Dionysiac cult.[9] The

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[3]See Hecht - Bacon (1974, 14-15), Hutchinson (1985, on 830).

[4]See Foley (1993, 135).

[5]Foley (1993, 135ff) regards the lament of the women as a social resistance to the city's former leader, since it undermines his claims.

[6]Brown (1976a, 6-8) argues, on metrical grounds, that this passage cannot be antistrophic.

[7]In the second half of the play emphasis is placed on curses and their accomplishment (cf. 655 ἀραὶ τελεσφόροι, 695 +τελεῖ+ ἀρά, 724 τελέσαι, 766 τέλειαι, 791 τελέσῃ).

[8]Cf. the verbal similarities between τελεία (832) - ἐξέπραξεν (840), Οἰδίπου τ' ἀρά (833) - πατρόθεν εὐκταία φάτις (841).

[9]So Hecuba's mourning for Polydorus is described as a νόμον βακχεῖον (*Hec.* 685-86); Antigone is compared to a βάκχα νεκύων in *Pho.* 1489-90; similarly Evadne in E. *Supp.* 1000-1 ἔβαν δρομάς...ἐκβακχευσαμένα. This motif goes back to the comparison of Andromache to a

intense emotional situation of the chorus is stressed with the striking asyndeton throughout the stanza; as Hutchinson (1985, on 835) notices, none of its sentences has a connecting particle. However, despite this passionate description, the tone of the kommos is surprisingly calm (see p. 176).

The third stasimon is figuratively a funereal lament, as τύμβῳ μέλος (835) suggests,[10] distinguished from the subsequent lamentation over the bodies (thus we have an inversion of what happened in real life). However, the praise (ἐγκώμιον) of the dead implied in the phrase τύμβῳ μέλος is ironically subverted in this case, since the chorus criticize the two brothers for their deeds. In the antistrophe this is effected with the interjection ἰὼ πολύστονοι (845), including a mixed tone of grief and reproach, which prepares for the similar ones that will follow in 875ff. Now the brothers are presented as doers of an unbelievable deed (845-46 τόδ' εἰργάσασθ' ἄπιστον[11]) rather than as victims, as in the strophe (836ff), two notions often juxtaposed in the kommos (e.g. 877-80, 961-65).

When the procession bearing the dead becomes visible to the spectators is a matter of dispute, although most scholars associate it with the astrophon 848ff (in this case οὐ λόγῳ, 847, prepares appropriately for the imminent arrival of the bodies). So Scott (1984, 218, n. 36) argues that it happens when the chorus utter the words τάδ' αὐτόδηλα (848), which is the point when they themselves see them approaching.[12] Taplin (1977, 170ff) relates this question to that of the entrance of the sisters and the authenticity of the anapaests in 861ff. He argues that they should be better eliminated, since a lyric entrance announcement followed immediately by a second announcement seems confused and over-elaborate, in which case the astrophon 848-60 need no longer be regarded as a unit and falls into two sections: 848-53, during which the corpses are brought on with a brief announcement (in view of the serious corruption of these lines he finds it even possible that originally the announcement was in iambic trimeters), and

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maenad in *Il*. 22. 460. On the associations of funerary lament and Dionysiac emotionality see Seaford (1993).

[10]See Hutchinson (1985, 179). The suggestion that μέλος refers to the previous stasimon (720ff), made by Tucker (1908, on 820) and Haldane (1965, 37), seems to me completely unjustified. ἔτευξα (835) is simply an instantaneous aorist.

[11]This adjective is repeatedly used in this scene: cf. also in 842 and 876 with reference to Laius' disobedience and the brothers respectively (in the latter case after the exclamation ἰὼ ἰὼ δύσφρονες, as in 846 after ἰὼ πολύστονοι).

[12]See Taplin (1977, 172-73), Hutchinson (1985, on 847).

854-60, which can be taken as an astrophic prelude to the lament in 875ff.[13]

On the other hand, Brown (1976a, 8-12) proposes to transpose lines 848-60 to precede 832-47 and prefers to place the entrance of the bodies after 960, arguing that there is no proof of their presence anywhere before that line. However, as he himself admits, it would be indeed unusual to have a passage of astrophic iambics coming after an anapaestic introduction while the entrance of the bodies (after 960) without any explicit announcement is also strange. Furthermore, as is generally accepted, 848ff suggest that the chorus see the procession approaching, despite Brown's attempts to prove otherwise, while the description of the mourning gestures of the chorus in 854ff would normally require the presence of the bodies. The use of lyric iambics instead of recitative anapaests, as in other entrance announcements (see pp. 47ff), is indicative of the intense emotional state of the chorus.[14]

The first section of that passage (848-53) reveals their agitation at the sight of the dead bodies with the employment of short phrases, asyndeton, a series of short syllables in 850 and the consecutive questions in 850-51, which indicate their inability to express their feelings in words (for this theme in laments see p. 106). By 854 we may suppose that the bodies have been set down in the orchestra, which justifies the shift of the choral song into something more imaginative and impressive, as the chorus announce formally their mourning for the brothers in a lengthy and elaborate sentence (854-60). They exhort themselves to smite their heads, a gesture which will assist the boat of Charon carrying the two brothers to cross Acheron.[15] The connection of the images of mourning and propelling a ship is achieved by the insertion of words which apply literally to the dirge (γόων, ἀμφὶ κρατί,

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[13]So this prelude would match the one in 961-65 before the second part of the kommos. Astrophic preludes are not unusual in laments (cf. also *Hel.* 164-66).

[14]As Hutchinson (1985, 179) argues, "the prelude is sung because anapaests would have interrupted the continuity of the whole, and because this introduction must rise higher than 822-31".

[15]As Brown (1976a, 15) remarks, αἰέν (856) adds effectively to the pathos of the scene: mourning has always been practised as a means of assisting the dead to complete their final journey.

χεροῖν) among words which, borrowed from nautical imagery, are related to mourning:[16] ἐρέσσετ',[17] πόμπιμον,[18] πίτυλον.[19]

The depiction of the ship propelled by the chorus' dirge is an elaborate one, as it is contrasted with the θεωρίς, the embassy ship the Athenians sent to Delos, the sacred island of Apollo, so that the atmosphere of lamentation and death is contrasted with that of rejoicing.[20] The embassy ship was decorated for the festive occasion and had white sails whereas this one is ἄστολον[21] with black sails.[22] The epithets in 858 are sometimes taken to define χέρσον, in which case the meaning is that the land towards which the ship of death is travelling is a sunless one, untrodden by Apollo. However, Brown (1976a, 16-17) argues that the syntax suggests that the epithets should be taken with θεωρίδα, assuming that Apollo was thought to be present in some sense on it (perhaps it carried an image of him), whereas he would never tread on the ship of Charon; he shunned death and mourning.[23] The reference to Apollo has certainly a particular bearing in this play since he is responsible for the destruction of the family of Laius.[24] The land of the dead is πάνδοκον, 'all-receiving', 'common to all', whereas Delos was forbidden to the dead, and ἀφανῆ, 'dark', a characterization contrasted with the name of the island itself

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[16]For a detailed discussion of the fusion of the two images see Brown (1976a, 17-19).

[17]For the use of this verb in similar contexts cf. *Pers.* 1046.

[18]This word as well as others from the same root such as προπέμπω are often used in the sense of escorting the dead (cf. also *Sept.* 916, 1059). Especially on the use of προπομπός in funereal contexts see Hall (1996, on 1036).

[19]For an extensive discussion of the different meanings and uses of this word see Barrett (1964, on 1464). For its metaphorical use relating to the blows of self-infliction cf. *Tro.* 1236.

[20]For a detailed analysis of this comparison see Tucker (1908, on 839ff), van Nes (1963, 93-95), Cameron (1971, 68-69), Brown (1976a, esp. 19-21), Hutchinson (1985, on 856-60).

[21]Brown (1976a, 15-16) seems to be suspicious about the meaning of this reading as 'undecorated'.

[22]The real θεωρίς had black sails on one occasion, when Theseus on his return from Crete forgot to change the sails to white and Aegeus, taking that to mean that his son had failed in his expedition, threw himself from the Acropolis. This instance shows that the association of the ship of death with the θεωρίς is not, after all, completely groundless.

[23]Hutchinson (1985, on 858) considers τὰν ἀνάλιον θεωρίδα a strange expression, and deletes the adjective, while Brown (1976a, 20) suggests that it could act as a gloss on ἀστιβῆ Ἀπόλλωνι.

[24]One can think of the etymology of his name given in *Ag.* 1080ff.

(δῆλος means 'bright', 'clear').[25] It is generally accepted that the most prominent image in *Sept.* is that of the ship of state,[26] which develops in the course of the play reflecting, accordingly, its focus. So in 689-91, which anticipates the imagery of 854ff, the ship is applied to the family of Laius, which sails upon the river Cocytus towards its final destruction, while in 854ff it is transformed into the boat of Charon, which carries to Hades the last descendants of Laius. The sea that prevails in previous appearances of the nautical imagery has now been substituted for Acheron while oarsmen become the women of the chorus with their arm movements.

The problem of the authenticity of verses 861-74 is related to that of the authenticity of the final scene (1005ff). It is natural to suppose that these anapaests were written in order to prepare for it by introducing the sisters. Numerous discussions have been made on grounds of style, metre and vocabulary of these passages to prove that they are or are not authentic. Some recent discussions arguing that they are spurious are to be found in Fraenkel (1964), Dawe (1967, 1978), Nicolaus (1967), Taplin (1977, 176-91). On the other hand, Scott (1984, 162-65) supports the authenticity of these passages; Erbse (1974) that of the final scene; Pötscher (1958) accepts the sisters in the lament but rejects the final scene; Brown (1976b) rejects lines 861-74 and therefore Antigone's part in the final scene, but accepts the rest of it, i.e. the herald's speech and the choral anapaests, as genuine. Lloyd-Jones (1959, with an extensive bibliography on the subject) has tried to show not necessarily that the passages in question are authentic but that the evidence against them does not prove with certainty that they are spurious. I am convinced that both the anapaestic verses 861-74 and the final scene are interpolated, and I will argue towards that direction.

The main arguments against the authenticity of verses 861-74 may be summarized as follows. They oddly interrupt the lament of the chorus announced impressively in lines 854-60, while their style is problematic,[27] especially so after these lines. Taplin (1977, 170ff) observes in addition that the case of mourners introduced after the arrival of the corpse as well as of two successive entrance announcements are unusual in tragedy. If the sisters are

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[25]For this connection see Pindar fr. 33c.

[26]Dumortier (1935, 27ff) discusses it extensively. As Cameron (1971, 58) notes, *Sept.* "presents the most extended example of the metaphor of the ship of state in ancient literature".

[27]For a criticism of the language of this passage see Fraenkel (1964, 58-59), Nicolaus (1967, 15-29), Dawe (1978, 90-92). The attempts of Pötscher (1958, 143-47) and Lloyd-Jones (1959, 100-4) to defend it are not always successful.

eliminated, then the sole mourner of the brothers is a chorus unrelated to them, a peculiarity in kommoi (see pp. 70-71). Clearly, then, the interpolator introduced the sisters so that the dead would be lamented by their close relatives. This introduction is also in accordance with the larger part of the actors at a later date when that of the chorus had been considerably restricted.

However, the interpolator failed to give the lament the personal element the presence of Antigone and Ismene would require. So apart from lines 996-97, which are problematic anyway,[28] in no other part of the kommos do the mourners express their personal grief. Therefore to conclude, based exclusively on these lines, that the part 961-1004 was written for the sisters, as Lloyd-Jones (1959, 107-8) does, seems to me unjustifiable and not to bear in mind the general tone of the lament. Surely if the sisters were meant to participate in it there would have been phrases characteristic exclusively of them. Furthermore, if this were the case, they remain silent for a very long time (almost one hundred lines). As Taplin (1972, 84ff) has persuasively shown, this long silence is totally unlike an Aeschylean one, since it is not revealing of the emotional state of the sisters nor does it add anything to the overall dramatic situation, and attempts to prove the opposite are not convincing.[29] Some editors, wishing to give the sisters a longer role, give them parts in the first section of the lament (875-960).[30] However, this is clearly excluded by the choral statement that they will lament first (866),[31] which means that the sisters have to wait till verse 961. Therefore I accept that verses 861-74 are spurious and that the part 961-1004 was sung by two members of the chorus.

The singly divided stanzas of the first section of the kommos (875-960) can be reasonably distributed between two semi-choruses. Its iambic metre is often syncopated, combined with several other cola such as anapaestic, dochmiac, choriambic, aeolic, in such an arrangement that, as Hutchinson (1985, 182) remarks, the portion sung by one semi-chorus is rhythmically distinct from that sung by the other.

As has already been stated, the first part of the lament functions as a subverted encomium, conveyed through an accumulation of adjectives and

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[28]See Fraenkel (1964, 60-62), Taplin (1977, 177, n. 2), Hutchinson (1985, on 996f.).

[29]E.g. Lloyd-Jones (1959, 101-2), Scott (1984, 215-16, n. 21).

[30]See the references cited by Taplin (1977, 179, n. 1).

[31]Taplin (1972, 87-88) discusses the unpoetic phrase πρότερον φήμης, which is taken to mean 'before their song', and the emendations proposed by several scholars, which, however, cause other problems.

participles, to an extent unusual for a lament, describing the character and actions of the brothers. So the first pair starts with a strong criticism of them (875-76), culminating in the idea that they have sacked their own house (877-78),[32] which is repeated in the antistrophe with the ironic use of ἐρειψίτοιχοι (882), a type of epithet which was usually applied to great warriors.[33] Emphasis in this pair is placed on the notion of the house (cf. 877 δόμους, 880 δόμων, 881 δωμάτων) and the close association between its destruction and the death of the brothers. The latter idea is repeated in the second strophe 895-96: the piercing blow that killed them was also a piercing blow for the house. The third antistrophe starts by praising their bravery in battle (922-25) with language normally expected to be applied to great warriors.[34] However, this praise is ambivalent, since they caused harm to their own countrymen, and is overshadowed by their abominable deed of mutual fratricide (cf. 922 ἀθλίοισιν). In the lines that follow (926ff) language of praise for the mother of a dead warrior is, similarly, employed only to be distorted: Jocasta is considered to be the most unfortunate of all mothers. The reason is given in the following lines (929ff): as the birth of Eteocles and Polyneices was a monstrosity, being the product of incest, likewise their death by mutual killing was a horrible deed. The horror of fratricide is stressed by the juxtaposition of τετυμμένοι - ὁμοσπλάγχνων τε πλευρωμάτων (887-90), ἀλλαλοφόνοις - ὁμοσπόροισιν, ὁμόσποροι - πανώλεθροι (930-33). Another inversion of the praise of the brothers is intended by the use of ἐπανθίσαντες followed by πόνοισι in 951-52: instead of having crowned their race with victories, they have destroyed it with their death.

The irony pervading the lament is exploited especially in the use of the imagery of allotment, which together with the related themes of arbitration, division and death, which are all interwoven with one another in a complex way, constitutes the main source of imagery in the first section.[35] The imagery of allotment is recurrent in *Sept.* in various contexts,[36] but with

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[32]As Hutchinson (1985, on 877f.) remarks, this idea is made more poignant if we accept αἰχμᾷ instead of ἀλκᾷ in 878.

[33]See Hutchinson (1985, on 882f.).

[34]Hutchinson (1985, on 922-5) traces an epic flavour in this utterance, which would serve to enhance the valour of the brothers.

[35]Thalmann (1978, 62-78) gives a detailed analysis of the use of each of these images in the play and of the way they are interwoven with one another.

[36]See Thalmann (1978, 69-72), who remarks in addition (78) that language of allotment occurs more frequently in this play than in any other extant work of Aeschylus.

reference to the brothers' division of their inheritance it is introduced first at the beginning of the second stasimon (727-33). Thalmann (1978, 63ff) argues that the audience of the fifth cent. B.C. must have been familiar with the custom of equal division of inheritance and casting of lots for the shares under the supervision of an arbiter, a procedure which is distorted in the case of the brothers since they divide their inheritance by hostile means (cf. 788-89 σιδαρονόμῳ...χερί). He suggests in addition (62) that the actual phrasing of the curse is given in 788-90 and that the language of allotment may have originated in it (cf. 789 δια...λαχεῖν). Hutchinson (1985, xxix) also considers verses 788ff, suggesting that the curse is likely to have mentioned iron, probably (xxvi) reconciliation (as judged from 766ff) and perhaps more allusively the division of the inheritance (as may be implied from 711). On the other hand, Cameron (1971, 24ff) traces its wording in 727-29 and 941-42, arguing for a gradual revelation of its meaning in the course of the play.

The image of iron as arbiter between the brothers is also introduced at the beginning of the second stasimon (727ff), appropriately since it covers the time during which the duel between them takes place, is mentioned later by the messenger (816-17) and is fully exploited in the final lament (cf. 883-84, 911-12, and especially 941-44). The notion of iron as mediator is combined with that of Ares (cf. 908-10, 944-46), not unjustifiably since he is the personification of war and dispute. Thalmann (1978, 73-74) shows that in the figure of iron or Ares Aeschylus distorts several uses of arbitration, both in the public and the private sphere, for example, that the arbiter, although he has done his job well, does not get any thanks (908-10, 941-46) and that he is a foreigner (727-28, 941-42), although in the case of political mediation he was usually sought from a friendly state. However, ironically he is finally proved to be not at all a stranger but the iron of their own swords. Thalmann (1978, 73-74) also argues that the function of iron as a settler of quarrels (941), the characterization of Ares as διαλλακτήρ (908) and the use of the verb διήλλαχθε (883-84) for the reconciliation of the brothers point to the technical terms διαλλακταί and διαλλάττειν, which describe the task of both public and private arbiters as reconcilers. In this case the arbiter has indeed brought all their quarrels to an end (cf. 936-37).[37]

Associated with the idea of arbitration is that of the division of inheritance, introduced first when Eteocles refers to the truth of the dreams as πατρῴων χρημάτων δατήριοι (711), taken up in the second stasimon as

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[37]For the theme of arbitration and related technical terms see also Hutchinson (1985, on 727-33).

κτεάνων χρηματοδαίτας (729) and in the final lament in the similar expression χρημάτων δατητάς (944-45). Here the idea of division of property obtains a literal meaning as well, namely, the division of the bodies of the brothers by the sword (cf. 895-96 διανταίαν..., 934 διατομαῖς οὐ φίλαις), which is prepared in line 735 when the chorus express their fears in case the brothers die αὐτοδάικτοι, 'self-slain', 'self-divided'. The notion of division by lot is also associated with that of μοῖρα, 'fate': 906-7 ἐμοιράσαντο...ὥστ' ἴσον λαχεῖν, 947-48 ἔχουσι μοῖραν λαχόντες....

The notion of death is inevitably associated with that of μοῖρα and lot. ὥστ' ἴσον λαχεῖν (907) certainly refers to the equal shares of death the brothers have received, especially in view of the preceding θανάτου τέλος (905). A word-play on λαγχάνω in relation to death is probably intended in the use of λαχαί (914),[38] 'an equal share in their father's grave', although it is etymologically associated with λαχαίνω (in that case λαχαί refers to the digging of the grave). Ironically, their shares in land will be abundant beneath their bodies (949-50), although what they now need is just enough land to be buried (cf. 731-32, 818). Earth is a rich source of imagery in *Sept.*[39] When the chorus contemplate the possible outcome of the duel of Eteocles and Polyneices, they use the picture of the earth drinking their blood (735-36), which is picked up by the messenger (820-21) and is developed in the final lament (937-40) with the comment that now the brothers are truly ὅμαιμοι since their blood is mingled in the earth, an ironic play on the normal use of this adjective to refer to the ties of brotherhood. Its use (cf. also in 681) is in accordance with the other ὁμο- compounds found in this lament (see p. 170), which, by emphasizing the blood relationship, stress the horror of fratricide.

Musical imagery is pervasive in the exchange of the two semi-choruses. The second antistrophe begins with a reference to the mourning all over Thebes, which is joined with the mourning of the chorus, with the emphatic use of στόνος, στένουσι, στένει (900-1).[40] The idea of the lament rending the city (900 διήκει) is picked up in the description of γόος as δαϊκτήρ, 'heart-rending' (916). In 916-21 the chorus employ highly decorative language to describe the qualities of γόος (see p. 83), which is presented as acting almost for its own sake (cf., similarly, *Cho.* 330-31), which shows its extreme power to control the emotional reactions of the mourners. The last choral utterance (953ff) constitutes a distortion of the song and the trophy of victory,

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[38]Page (1972) obelizes 912-14.

[39]See Fowler (1970, 36), Cameron (1971, 85-95), Thalmann (1978, 42-50).

[40]Cf. the repeated use of this verb and its derivatives in the first stasimon of *P.V.* 397ff.

as the language of triumph is applied ironically to the destruction of the house. Both brothers had anticipated a victory celebration: Eteocles had instructed the women to raise the ὀλολυγή (267-68) and Polyneices was praying that he might sing the ἀλώσιμον παιᾶνα (635), but finally the Arae raise the victory-cry (953 ἐπηλάλαξαν). At 705ff the chorus suggest to Eteocles that the daemon of the house may turn to be more favourable, but instead the curses rout the family (954-55), so in the end he is the winner (cf. 812-13). While the Arae raise the song of victory Ate erects a trophy at the gates where the brothers killed each other (956-57) instead of the τροπαῖα Eteocles had promised to erect, if victorious (277).

Although the exchange between two semi-choruses is not usual, the employment of antiphony suggests a characteristic feature of ritual kommos. In the first two pairs and the fourth strophe the first semi-chorus takes the lead while the second replies continuing their thought and completing their utterance: 879 μέλεοι δῆθ',[41] 895 λέγεις,[42] 936 νείκεος ἐν τελευτᾷ is picked up in the following synonymous phrase πέπαυται δ' ἔχθος (937). By contrast, in the third and fourth strophes the first semi-chorus comments on themes the second one has just introduced. On the other hand, in the third pair the second semi-chorus introduces themes completely different from the preceding ones, namely, the power of γόος in the strophe and the reference to Jocasta in the antistrophe (the passion of γόος in the first case finds its counterpart in the horror of the crimes in the second). Similarly, the utterance of the second semi-chorus in the fourth antistrophe marks a strong break to what precedes, as they change to the theme of inverted praise.

In the second part of the lament (961-1004) the two semi-choruses are reasonably substituted for their leaders, delivering one-line or antilabic utterances in strict antiphonal alternation,[43] while the whole chorus would most naturally sing the refrain.[44] The iambic metre continues from the first

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[41]This particle takes up interjections in ritual antiphony (see p. 92), but here it takes up adjectives (cf. also 933) or verbs (982) since they are repeated instead of interjections. As Hutchinson (1985, 180) remarks, "this section echoes the form, but diverges from the spirit, of more normal lamentation."

[42]For this type of response in kommoi cf. *Cho.* 444, *Tro.* 1310.

[43]As for lines 978-81, which Page (1972) gives to the same singer, I think that they would be better delivered by several, as most editors suppose, so that the distribution of parts corresponds to that of the strophe (see Hutchinson 1985, on 979).

[44]See Hutchinson (1985, 181).

part of the kommos, now pure without the combination of other metres,[45] with some syncopation which is especially dominant in the last lines of the epode (1000ff), probably to express a greater emotional intensity. As in the kommos of *Pers.*, the second part of this one has a simpler metrical form than the first, probably so that the attention of the spectators will be wholly occupied by the spectacle of the two bodies displayed symmetrically for mourning (cf. the technical term πρόκεισαι in 965) and addressed alternately by the two singers.

In this part of the kommos the exchange between two solo voices is exploited brilliantly to emphasize the symmetry of the scene: there are two bodies and two singers, an effect which would not be achieved by the exchange between an *exarchos* and a chorus. This arrangement also helps to emphasize the equality of the brothers. As Hutchinson (1985, on 961-1004) argues, neither singer mourns a particular brother. They are entirely indistinguishable, which shows that they treat them as of completely equal status. Furthermore, the anonymity of the singers directs the attention of the spectators exclusively to the dead whereas if the lyric dialogue was shared between the sisters or between an *exarchos* and a chorus, it is almost certain that the spectators would focus on them as well. The symmetry in metre, rhythm and language is also remarkable, reinforced by the repetition of the same word (or element) in the same place in isometric cola (see 962, 963, 964, 971, 972, 983, 993, 994). Like the symmetry in spectacle, it is exploited so as to emphasize the equality of the fate of Eteocles and Polyneices.

The elaborate imagery of the first part of the kommos gives way to simpler phrases in the second part, which is obviously defined by the shorter utterances of the participants.[46] Whereas previously the brothers were talked of as a pair, now they are addressed individually. The device is different but the result is the same since in both cases no distinction is drawn between them. The question which singer addresses which brother is puzzling. Hutchinson (1985, on 961-1004) concludes after a long argumentation that with the exception of lines where the part of the second participant starts with σὺ δ' (961, 969-70, 989-90), where both brothers are addressed, the two participants refer to one brother only in each stanza. Since it is Polyneices in the antistrophe and the first part of the epode (obviously the subject of ἐδείξατο and κατῆλθες in 979, 991 respectively), Eteocles must be

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[45]With the possible exception of two dochmiacs in 975=986 (see Hutchinson 1985, on 975-7).

[46]Cf. the transition from more elaborate language and themes to threnodic language *par excellence* in the final kommos of *Pers.*

symmetrically addressed in the prelude and the strophe. The first speaker is obviously the leader in this exchange since his words are constantly picked up by the second, whereas the opposite happens only once (981-82).[47]

In the prelude, which consists exclusively of antilabic utterances, the symmetry of expression, accompanied by symmetry in metre after the first line, is remarkable. Here the singers address the brothers as both victims and doers (961-65)[48] and finally make a brief announcement of their lament (964), which matches the extensive one preceding the first part of the kommos (854ff). They continue in the strophe with a reference to their passionate emotional state (967-68),[49] expressed with the verbs μαίνεται and στένει (in a chiasmus figure), which recall previous occurrences: μαίνεται points to the theme of madness of lamentation exploited in 835ff, στένει recalls the repetition of this verb in 901. In the middle of the stanza (971) the two speakers point to the paradox of the mutual killing of the brothers, which justifies their previous characterizations of them as πάνδυρτε (969), πανάθλιε (970).

In the refrain the chorus invoke, recapitulating, the supernatural agents responsible for the disaster: Moira, Oedipus' shade,[50] Erinys, all of them characterized by adjectives indicating their awesome power. The epithet attributed to Moira, βαρυδότειρα,[51] is characteristic of the portion she distributed to the brothers. As for the other two powers, although, as Hutchinson (1985, 205) remarks, an identification between them is not necessary, it is favoured by the use of πότνια, in 976 characterizing σκιά, in 886 Ἐρινύς, and the echo of μεγασθενής from line 70 where Ara and Erinys are identified. Moira and Erinys are also closely connected in Aeschylus,[52] so the reference to these three powers constitutes a powerful accumulation of the agents at work.

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[47]Those who give the lines to the sisters make Antigone speak first and Ismene follow, arguing that Antigone's utterances refer to Polyneices and Ismene's to Eteocles, an arrangement which, as Lloyd-Jones (1959, 106) shows, can be easily refuted.

[48]ἔθανες κατακτανών (961) was prepared in Polyneices' words as reported by the spy, κτανὼν θανεῖν (636). Symmetry in this line is also achieved by the chiasmus figure participle - verb - verb - participle.

[49]For an expression similar to 967 conveying passionate emotion cf. *Pers*. 991.

[50]It may point back to 710-11 ἐννυπνίων φαντασμάτων ὄψεις.

[51]Hutchinson (1985, on 975-7) notices that in the use of this adjective a common type of epithet for deities is perverted.

[52]See Fraenkel (1950, III. on 1535f.).

In the antistrophe neither brother is addressed. Here the singers begin by referring to Polyneices' return from exile (978-79), only to stress the subsequent disaster (980ff), a theme picked up in the epode (991ff). By contrast, the beginning of the epode (989-90) introduces a new theme, the knowledge the brothers obtained, probably of the power of the Erinys, if we accept τοί νιν instead of τοίνυν in 989, in which case νιν refers to the Erinys mentioned before.[53] From 1000 onwards the brothers are addressed together, as in the first part of the kommos. Lines 1000-1, 1002-3 form obvious pairs while 1004 is a comment on what precedes. The first two characterize the brothers, recapitulating their misfortune, while the next two refer to their burial, with 1003 answering 1002. The absence of ἄν after ὅπου in 1003 shows, as Hutchinson (1985, on 1003f.) remarks, that the speaker has a particular place in mind, which is made clear in the following verse: the brothers will be buried in the same place as Oedipus (although not necessarily in the same grave), which will be a πῆμα for him. Brown (1976b, 213-14) denies the implication even of the same place and takes πάρευνον metaphorically: the honourable burial given to the sons he cursed will pain the dead Oedipus. However, I think that lines 914 and 1004 would strongly suggest to the audience that the brothers are to be buried by their father (if not in the same grave, which I find more probable, certainly on the same spot), so it is made clear that they will receive a common funeral.[54]

This kommos does not present the agitation frequent in other kommoi. Although the chorus announce a passionate lament at the beginning (854ff) and later describe the extreme power of γόος (916ff), the tone of their utterances is generally restrained. They do not use any personal interjections such as ὤμοι, ἰώ μοι or other expressions of personal grief (apart from the disputed lines 996-97)[55] nor do they address the brothers with phrases of affection, as relatives of the dead would normally do. It is precisely the lack of any personal element that serves to direct the attention of the spectators exclusively towards the dead and their fate while the restrained tone makes possible the striking use of irony and the complex combination of images in the first section of the kommos.

If, as I strongly believe, the play ends with the choral lament, how much of the original text is missing? Hutchinson (1985, xlv) argues that the

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[53]See Hutchinson (1985, on 989).

[54]πάρευνον may also point metaphorically to the relationship of Eteocles and Polyneices with Oedipus as 'lying beside him', i.e. as his brothers.

[55]They used such an expression only when they first heard the news (808 οἳ 'γὼ τάλαινα).

insertions themselves indicate that the interpolator did not care to delete a considerable part of the original text or to rewrite it substantially, so he supposes that only a few lines were omitted at the end of the play. In 1002-4 there are hints of an impending procession. It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that a few lines followed with more explicit references to the processional exit of the chorus and probably the burial of the brothers before the play reached its end. The final anapaests explicitly allude to some sort of procession (1069 αἵδε προπομποί), which is paralleled in other Aeschylean plays (cf. *Pers*. 1069 ἐς δόμους κίε, 1077 πέμψω, *Eum*. 1006 τῶνδε προπομπῶν, 1034 πομπᾷ), so we can suppose that the interpolator reworked the actual ending of the play (which was perhaps also in the form of an anapaestic conclusion).

That we are very close to the end of the play with line 1004 can be also inferred from the similarity between the structure of this epode and the one concluding *Pers*. In both cases interjections are abundant: in *Sept*. all lines from 1000 onwards start with an interjection, and in view of the fact that in the epode of *Pers*. most of them are duplicated, it may be better to accept duplication of ἰώ in 1001-3 as well, as some mss suggest. If not, then its repetition in 1004 may mark the beginning of the processional exit. It seems that lines 1000-4 form a unit (the same interjection is repeated at the beginning of each and alliteration of π characterizes the first and the last), so perhaps after line 1004 the whole chorus sang the concluding part of the trilogy. Furthermore, Fraenkel (1961, 133-35) shows that the metrical pattern and syntax of the final verses of the kommos of *Sept*. are characteristic of laments at the end of tragedies. So, for example, he observes that the combination of a cretic and an iambic metron in 998, 1002 (with the interjections *extra metrum*) is exactly the metrical form of *Pers*. 1070, 1074. The same pattern is also found in two verses of a paratragic threnos towards the end of *Ach*. (1205-6). However, I think that he is wrong in suggesting that 1004 is the last line of the play. As Hutchinson (1985, on 1003f.) argues: "One would also expect the whole chorus to conclude, especially in view of the refrain in the strophic pair."

The arguments for and against the authenticity of the final scene are many and much-discussed. My purpose here is not to deal with, or even give a list of, them nor to get involved in the question whether it was influenced by S. *Ant*. or E. *Pho*. I will discuss only those which I consider of particular importance in relation to the final lament. The question whether a new issue can be raised at the end of a trilogy is arguable, and since we have only one

complete trilogy by Aeschylus it may not be safe to draw conclusions. However, in this case there are several indications in the text (cf. 742-45, 953-60) that the curse has reached an end with the deaths of the brothers, so a scene pointing to future troubles for the city is beside the point.[56] Furthermore, as has repeatedly been stated, in the final lament the two brothers are considered as completely equal from a moral point of view and equally accursed in the sight of the Erinys. The dual case, frequently employed after the messenger has brought the news of their death (cf. 812, 816, 921, 923, 959), stresses their doubleness, which is emphasized more specifically in verses such as 849-50 διπλᾶ...διδύμαιν...δίμορα (although the text is seriously corrupt), 972 διπλᾶ λέγειν - διπλᾶ δ' ὁρᾶν.[57] However, in the final scene the distinction between them from the point of view of the *polis* is renewed, as the messenger announces that Eteocles will be buried with honours as the defender of the city while Polyneices will be cast out as a traitor. It is clear that two different funerals are envisioned here, and the separate departure of the two semi-choruses, apparently by the two exits,[58] does not leave any doubt that the bodies will be taken to different places.[59] Thus the final scene is a disruption in the sense that it raises the distinction between the brothers the lament has so skilfully resolved.

Although in *Sept*. Eteocles is presented in a favourable light from the point of view of the besieged Thebans, the preceding stage of the trilogy may have supported Polyneices' claim of δίκη, so the final lament and the equal treatment the brothers receive from the chorus may be viewed as the attribution of final δίκη. This is better realized in performance if the mourners are representatives of the Theban state than if the lament has a more personal character. It is noticeable that, although Polyneices is an enemy of his city, the

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[56]Similarly, passages such as 689-91, 734-38, 813, 1054-56 arguably show that Aeschylus wishes to point to the extinction of the house of Laius with the death of Eteocles and Polyneices (734ff seem to rule out the existence of Antigone and Ismene as well) and does not allude to any further threat for the city, namely, the expedition of the Epigoni. However, this is a major controversial issue, closely related to the interpretation of ἀτέκνους (828), ἐπιγόνοις (903), which I do not intend to discuss here.

[57]The doubleness of Eteocles and Polyneices is also stressed in the choral lament of *Pho*. 1284-1307 with similar phrases (cf. 1288 δίδυμα τέκεα, 1296 δίδυμοι θῆρες).

[58]See Taplin (1977, 190).

[59]Lloyd-Jones' argument (1959, 96) that the two processions in different directions do not necessarily imply different destinations is surely not supported by the action and choreography of the play: see Brown (1976b, 213), Taplin (1977, 191).

whole of Thebes mourns for him no less than for Eteocles (900-2) and the chorus are φίλοι (909) of both, which strongly suggests that, although the extent of each brother's responsibility is not made clear in this play, they were equally guilty. So after their death and since the curse of Oedipus has been fulfilled a tone of reconciliation prevails. Therefore it seems to me unlikely that the play does not end in this conciliatory mood but continues with the herald's speech (1005ff), which refutes the equality between the brothers and the attribution of the final justice so strongly emphasized in the choral lament.[60]

I showed in the analysis of the kommos that, as in the case of *Pers.*, themes treated earlier in the play are picked up in it, combined in a complex way so as to serve the requirements of the lament, while the dramatic tension culminates in this scene as the bodies of the brothers become the centre of attention throughout it. So in its revelation of the full meaning of the curse with an accumulation of images, the final lament illuminates any references or allusions to it found in *Sept.* or even the other two plays; it thus functions as the culminating point not only of this play but of the trilogy as a whole, since the curse must be its focal point. When the chorus leave to bury the brothers all the issues previously raised have been solved. It seems to me that the cumulative and climactic effect of the lament will be destroyed by any scene following it, especially one which, in its present form, is so problematic. As one could hardly imagine any other scene following the kommos of *Pers.* without destroying its extraordinary effect, likewise I think that it is fair to say the same for the kommos of *Sept.*

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[60]On the other hand, Orwin (1980, 196) argues that the dispensations of δίκη are accomplished only with the final scene, but I am not persuaded by his arguments.

3. *CHOEPHORI* 306-478

When discussing the kommos of *Cho.* we are in the advantageous position, in contrast to those of *Pers.* and *Sept.*, of being able to estimate its function in the trilogy as a whole. Being placed in the first half of the play it looks both backwards and forwards, commenting on the action that precedes and initiating the action that follows. In its complex form, unique in tragedy, it combines the functions of an ἐπιτύμβιος θρῆνος and an ὕμνος ἀνακλητικός, which are closely related and share many themes.[1] Thus Aeschylus uses a ritual form familiar to his audience, adapting it to the specific dramatic requirements of the play.

As an ἐπιτύμβιος θρῆνος (cf. 334-35, 342) the kommos constitutes the first proper mourning rite that is acted out for Agamemnon; thus it accomplishes the expectations raised, but not fulfilled, at the end of the preceding play of the trilogy. The threnos that should have taken place there over the body of the dead king is postponed till the beginning of *Cho.*, and, after a considerable lapse of time, finally takes place by his tomb; thus, in effect it is the ἐπιτύμβιος αἶνος the Argive elders wanted for their king (*Ag.* 1547), from which they were prohibited by Clytemnestra.

In its function as an ὕμνος ἀνακλητικός the purpose of the kommos is to invoke Agamemnon's spirit so as to ensure his aid against his murderers. The chorus define it as ὕμνος of the nether powers in 475, which in this case is synonymous with ἐπωδή, as in *Pers.* 620, 625.[2] The direct appeal to Agamemnon for help starts late in the kommos and is very brief (456-60), but it continues at a considerable length in the iambic section that follows (479-509). The verbal similarities between the invocation of Agamemnon and that of Darius in *Pers.*[3] would most probably have suggested to the audience that

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[1]See Schadewaldt (1932, 313), Hölzle (1934, 47-48). For the practice of ἐπιτύμβιος θρῆνος cf. also E. *El.* 1326.

[2]See Haldane (1965, 39). For a discussion of prayers to the dead see Pulleyn (1997, 116ff).

[3]Cf. especially *Cho.* 459 ἄκουσον...μολών ~ *Pers.* 657-65 ἴθι ἰκοῦ, ἔλθ'...βάσκε...ὅπως...κλύῃς, *Cho.* 459 ἐς φάος ~ *Pers.* 630 ἐς φῶς, *Cho.* 489 ἄνες μοι ~ *Pers.* 650 ἀνείης, the invocation of Earth in *Cho.* 489 ~ *Pers.* 628-29, 640-41 (combined in *Pers.* with that of other nether powers). For the use of πέμπειν and its derivatives, which are frequent in the invocation of Darius (*Pers.* 626, 630, 644, 650), cf. *Cho.* 477. For the practice of necromancy in Aeschylus see especially Eitrem (1928), Lawson (1934), Bickel (1942), Rose (1950).

Agamemnon might rise from his tomb, which must have added to the suspense of the kommos. The reason for this failure has been explained in various ways. So Sommerstein (1980, 68-69) argues that the chthonic deities, although they want vengeance to be carried out, are reluctant to release Agamemnon from his tomb to help Orestes with his advice, while Garvie (1986, on 549) that there is no need for him to appear because his power has entered Orestes in the symbolic form of a snake (cf. 549 ἐκδρακοντωθεὶς δ' ἐγώ). At the end of the kommos Orestes appears indeed strong enough to act, so Agamemnon's presence is not needed, in contrast to that of Darius in *Pers.*, who has to offer advice and prophecy as Xerxes appears completely shattered.

As the kommoi of *Pers.* and *Sept.* form the culmination of the play and everything seems to lead up to them, so the scenes preceding the kommos of *Cho.* powerfully build towards it, as it unites the three voices previously heard separately.[4] Orestes starts his delivery in the prologue with an appeal to Hermes Chthonios (1-2)[5] and closes it with a prayer to Zeus (18-19) while in between he calls upon his father to listen to him. Similarly, Electra starts her parallel prayer with an appeal to Hermes and the chthonic deities (124aff), while after the two siblings have recognized one another Orestes prays to Zeus on behalf of both (246ff). The prayers to the chthonic powers and Zeus culminate in the kommos (cf. 399, 405ff and 382ff, 408ff respectively) and are exploited later in the play as well (cf. the accumulation of powers invoked in the choral anapaests 719-29 and in the second stasimon 783ff).[6] The appeal to Agamemnon for help, first introduced in Orestes' prayer and picked up in Electra's (130ff), is obviously the main purpose of the kommos. Agamemnon is repeatedly invoked with the verbs κλύω and ἀκούω before, during and after it (cf. 5, 139, 157, 332, 459, 500, 508), which are part of invocation ritual (cf. also 399, 476). In her prayer to Agamemnon after the parodos Electra describes her and Orestes' sufferings and the attitude of his

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[4]Lebeck (1971, 96-109) discusses in detail how the motifs of the scenes preceding the kommos are taken up in it.

[5]Garvie (1970) stresses the importance of the reference to chthonic Hermes at the very beginning of the play, which, according to Aeschylus' usual practice of establishing the mood of the play at the outset, looks forward to the kommos with its appeal to the underworld powers.

[6]As Winnington-Ingram (1980, 157) remarks, "the most striking feature, theologically speaking, of the *kommos* - and of the play as a whole - is the convergence of divine powers."

murderers (132ff) in her attempt to rouse his anger,[7] a theme which recurs in her first stanza in the kommos (332ff), in its second section (429ff) and in the iambic invocation that follows it (491ff).

As soon as the chorus enter the orchestra they introduce the theme of ritual lamentation (23ff), which they pick up in the kommos (423ff), and comment on the theme of retributive justice (48, 61ff), which they exploit further in 121ff, 160ff, and in the kommos (306ff, 400ff). The second strophe and antistrophe and the epode of the parodos end with dark, gloomy pictures (cf. 51ff, 65, 83). Darkness is a prevalent image in the first half of the play: the black clothes of the chorus (11) and probably of Electra (16-18), the mourning for Agamemnon, the repeated invocations of the nether powers, the libations to them and, above all, the dominance of the tomb of Agamemnon, around which the action revolves, contribute to this atmosphere.

The kommos has been the subject of a long controversy as far as its purpose and its relation to the action are concerned.[8] Especially disputed is the question of how determined Orestes is to undertake the deed of vengeance before the beginning of the kommos and to what extent his original attitude changes during it, in other words whether the kommos is dramatically static or dynamic. The principal representative of the first view is Schadewaldt (1932), who argues that Orestes has taken his decision before the kommos begins and that he remains constant in his resolution throughout the play with the exception of his momentary hesitation in 899; thus, he explains all his expressions of despair found in the kommos as ritual motifs. This view, which presents the kommos as rather lacking in purpose, was developed as an answer to another extreme treatment of the subject, that of Wilamowitz (1914, 205-10), who argued that the main function of the kommos was to present Orestes' inner struggle before he reaches the decision to kill his mother. However, this view does not take into account Orestes' presentation of his motives preceding the kommos (299ff).

Lesky (1943) attempted a compromise between these extreme views by arguing that the kommos depicts the process of Orestes' deciding to follow Apollo's command, making his own the task forced on him by the god earlier; thus, it is during the course of the kommos that Orestes is transformed into a tragic person. Lesky (1966) parallels Orestes' attitude during the kommos with that of other Aeschylean heroes (Agamemnon, Eteocles), who, once they

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[7]For Electra's role in the scene preceding the kommos see Tarkow (1979).

[8]For a discussion of the dominant views on the kommos see Lesky (1943, 4-9), Lebeck (1971, 94), Conacher (1974b, 332-34), Garvie (1986, 122-24), Sier (1988, 70-77).

have undertaken to commit a dreadful deed under the compulsion of necessity, begin to desire it. However, as Scott (1984, 203, n. 97) argues, there is no parallel to Lesky's view of Orestes in the kommos, since Aeschylean characters make their decisions quickly without openly debating issues on stage. Furthermore, he finds (1984, 91) unparalleled in Aeschylean drama the separation of the two sides of Orestes' motivation, as argued by Lesky (1943).[9] In fact, this is easily refuted by the passage immediately preceding the kommos (297-305), where Orestes clearly states his personal desire for vengeance according to his own ἵμεροι (299), which are in compliance with the god's commands (300 ἐφετμαί). Line 298 suggests that even in the case of disbelief in the oracle[10] the deed of vengeance must be done because of the personal motives stated immediately afterwards. Divine and human motivation, necessity and free will are inextricably interwoven in this passage, as later in the kommos (cf. 436-37).[11]

More acceptable, in the sense that it takes into account the difficulties the previous interpretations present, is Lebeck's argument (1971, 110-14) that Orestes has taken his decision before the kommos but during it he gains greater understanding of his task, so at the end of it he can repeat his resolve with full awareness of the situation.[12] The reasons compelling him to undertake the deed of vengeance, as they appear in his speech preceding the kommos, are grief for his father (300), poverty (301), a theme mentioned in his prayer to Zeus as well (249-50), and his desire to rescue the glorious conquerors of Troy from dishonour and humiliation (302-4). All these reasons

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[9]Garvie (1986, 124) agrees that it is difficult to find anything like this elsewhere in tragedy, but he suggests that "one might compare the well-known practice of epic 'not only to narrate simultaneous events successively, but also *to represent them as if they had actually occurred successively*' ".

[10]Whether this disbelief refers to the oracle as a whole (see Lebeck 1971, 111) or only to the threats of Apollo (Conacher 1974b, 331-32) is not a matter of importance for the present discussion.

[11]Garvie (1970, 82ff; 1986, xxxiff) argues that Orestes is not doubly but triply motivated: apart from the Olympian gods (Zeus, Apollo) and his personal will, vengeance is demanded by Agamemnon and the nether powers. The relationship between Orestes and the latter is as complex as that between him and Apollo: he becomes their instrument but at the same time the decision to act is his own.

[12]Cf. also Scott (1984, 92): "The kommos in the *Choephoroi* continues and supports the first scene, introducing elements from all sides to portray the complexity of the choice that Orestes has already made."

are developed in the kommos. The first constitutes one of its chief motivations since it is Orestes' first chance to mourn properly for his father (cf. 8ff οὐ γὰρ παρὼν ὤμωξα σόν, πάτερ, μόρον), the second is taken up in 336ff, 407ff while the third is developed mainly in Orestes' wish that Agamemnon had found a glorious death (345ff) and in the information he gets about the dishonour inflicted on his corpse and about Electra's humiliation (429ff, 439, 444ff). Lebeck (1971, 113) remarks that the only reason Orestes does not mention before the kommos is that of retributive justice, which he, like Electra previously, is taught by the chorus during it. She dismisses (112) the temporal relationship between the kommos and the preceding dialogue, justifying on these grounds the fact that Orestes states his decision both before and during the kommos. I think, however, that it is better to suggest with Conacher (1974b, 339) that this distinction lies in the difference between logical choice and the emotional impetus the deed requires, which are appropriately represented in dramatically different terms.

It is obvious from what has been said that the kommos has potentialities different from the preceding dialogue. It dramatizes within the ritual context of lamentation Orestes' process towards a more fixed resolution and creates the emotional context within which he restates the decision he had taken earlier, based on logical grounds. Furthermore, Orestes' participation in a proper lament for Agamemnon legitimizes him as his heir,[13] while the participation of Electra and the chorus creates the social context through which he becomes an integrated member of the society, in contrast to his previous status as an exile. Orestes has to undergo this procedure in order to be able to act rightfully as Agamemnon's son and avenger, so the kommos is a presupposition for the initiation of the action that follows. It is characteristic that after it Orestes acts with some authority, as he alone is able to explain Clytemnestra's dream, while the fact that Electra's role ends after the iambic invocation following the kommos (507) indicates that he can now undertake her role in motivating vengeance, so she is no longer needed.

The kommos is the longest and most complex lyric composition in surviving Greek tragedy; according to Wilamowitz (1914, 209) it is indeed the most complicated song in Greek poetry. It is arranged in four sections, in the first two of which the corresponding stanzas do not succeed one another but are interlocked in an elaborate way. The first section (306-422) is based on triadic structure. It consists of four triads where Orestes' strophes are answered by Electra's antistrophes, separated from them by choral stanzas

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[13]For the connection between lamentation and inheritance see p. 17, n. 37.

which form two strophic pairs. Each triad is preceded and followed by a recitative anapaestic system (after the last one, however, the anapaests disappear). Scott (1984, 89) remarks that although anapaests are not generally a strophic metre, Aeschylus has made them approximate to strophic responsion in the choral stanzas: so in this case 340-44 correspond to 400-4, each of these units falling in each half of the first section of the kommos. The pattern of stanzas in this section is as follows: anap. α β α′- anap. γ β′γ′- anap. δ ϵ δ′- anap. ζ ϵ′ζ′. From the elaborate triadic pattern of the first section with the interchange of lyric and epirrhematic parts the kommos moves on to simpler, shorter forms. Besides, the disappearance of anapaests from the second section onwards helps accelerate the mourning. This section (423-455) is not characterized by the symmetry of the first one: Orestes is assigned only one stanza, Electra two and the chorus three. Brother and sister do not sing in responsion any longer; their lyrics now correspond to those of the chorus. The arrangement of the parts in this section is unbalanced, indeed unparalleled in tragedy: α β γ γ′α′β′, which is why some critics have tried to restore order by moving the stanza assigned to Orestes after 455, in which case the pattern would be: α β γ α′β′γ′.[14] The third section of the kommos (456-465) consists of a single strophic pair, which joins the voices of all three participants in corresponding utterances of the same singer. So here the triadic structure of the first section returns, but in an arrangement not found elsewhere in the kommos, in that the characters break the form of the stanza by singing individual lines. The kommos concludes with a strophic pair sung by the chorus (466-475)[15] followed by three anapaestic lines from the coryphaeus (476-78), thus it ends with the same metre with which it started. As I will discuss in the course of my analysis, the structure of the kommos is closely related to its content, affecting its interpretation as a whole.

The metrical pattern is similar to the structural one: from variation and shifting of rhythms towards simplicity and repetition of the same rhythm, which recalls the similar pattern in the two distinct parts of the kommoi of *Pers*. and *Sept*. So the first section of the kommos is mainly aeolo-choriambic with the appearance of various cola, combined with iambics, enoplia, dactyls, dochmiacs.[16] The iambic rhythm, which makes occasionally

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[14]This shift, however, involves questions of interpretation, which I will discuss when dealing with these lines.

[15]This is the prevalent view, although there are different opinions about the assignment of this pair. See Scott (1984, 94, 204, n. 104), Garvie (1986, on 466-75).

[16]For a detailed metrical analysis of the kommos see Garvie (1986, 357ff).

its appearance in the first four strophes, has a more dominant presence in strophe ϵ and, after prevailing in strophe ζ, the second section of the kommos is dominated by a monotonous iambic rhythm. Str. η is characterized by an unresolved repeated iambic (all verses apart from one are trimeters), strophes θ, ι by two basic patterns: iambic plus cretic, iambic plus ithyphallic. In the third section repetition continues (str. κ opens with three identical lines: iambic plus lecythion) while the last one, based mainly on choriambic and hipponactean, moves away from the iambic pattern, recalling the rhythms of the first section. As Thomson (1929, 125ff) shows, there is a close connection between the metrical pattern and the content of the kommos. The employment of three voices in its lyric parts (two actors and the chorus) and one in the anapaestic sections (the coryphaeus), and the elaborate exchange between them contribute to the overall complexity of the kommos, which undoubtedly constitutes part of its power.

The question which of the participants dominates the kommos is disputed. McCall (1990, 23) argues that simply on numerical and structural grounds it is the chorus: of the 173 lines 96 belong to them, 42 to Electra and 35 to Orestes, which means that 60% of the total lines is choral; furthermore, the kommos begins and concludes with long choral utterances.[17] McCall argues in addition (23ff) that the structural dominance of the chorus in this composition is in accordance with the leading role they assume in their exchanges with Orestes and Electra (they advise, encourage, exhort them whereas the opposite never happens) and with their attitude in the play in general (cf. their instructions to Electra before the kommos, to Kilissa in 766ff). Their dominating presence is all the more striking as it is in contrast with their lowly status as foreign slave women,[18] to the extent that, according to McCall (1990, 26), "No other slave chorus in surviving tragedy is remotely comparable, and very few choruses of any kind." In fact, several scholars favour the idea that the female slaves of *Cho.* prepare in their appearance and dominating character the Furies of *Eum.* So Sider (1978, 18ff) insists on the similarity of the black robes of mourning, the masks with bloody cheeks and the torn clothes of the chorus of *Cho.* (as described in 10ff, 24ff) with the torn

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[17]Bowen (1986, 73) also talks about "the vital role of the chorus in starting and pacing and framing the invocation as a whole."

[18]McCall (1990, 17-21) employs a long argumentation to show that despite the several views expressed about their identity, the only safe supposition the text allows us to make is that they are foreign slave women, servants in the palace for a long time, without any indication that they are specifically Trojan, brought back home by Agamemnon.

black robes and the bloody faces of the chorus of *Eum.* (cf. *Eum.* 52ff), arguing that the appearance of the slave women suits their role in the first half of the play as agents of the Furies (they express the Furies' code of vengeance in 400ff). A group of women unrelated to the deceased lamenting at his tomb was contrary to funerary legislation (see pp. 16-17). How, then, was the audience supposed to react to their extreme behaviour? I think that the answer is much the same as in the case of the kommos of *Pers.* (see p. 162): they would disapprove of the excessive female, oriental-like attitude, but they would also have the opportunity to enjoy on stage a clearly Greek practice which was prohibited in real life.

In the first part of the kommos Electra echoes the music as well as the content of Orestes' stanzas, which shows their parallel roles, while the chorus lead their thoughts reassuring and encouraging them. In particular, the choral stanzas serve as a completion and strengthening of the lament of the siblings, while the epirrhemas lead their thought to a new direction;[19] notably, they all start with ἀλλά (306, 340, 375,[20] 400). In the opening anapaests the coryphaeus calls on the Moirai to accomplish Zeus' justice, presenting the inexorable demands of the ancient law of retaliation as delivered by a personified Dike.[21] The whole conception is emphasized with the strikingly symmetrical phrases ἀντὶ μέν...τελείσθω, ἀντὶ δέ...τινέτω (309-10, 312-13), the three paroemiacs 308, 311, 314 ending in -ει (μεταβαίνει, ἀυτεῖ, φωνεῖ) and the alliteration of τ throughout the stanza. However, the law that the doer must suffer (313 δράσαντα παθεῖν)[22] is expressed as a general statement, so it has ominous implications not only for Clytemnestra but for Orestes as well.

Orestes ignores the theme of revenge and starts his part in the kommos by trying to establish communication with his dead father with the ritual formula τί σοι φάμενος ἢ τί ῥέξας τύχοιμ'...; (315-17).[23] There is a big gap between the worlds of the living and the dead (319-20), represented here

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[19]See Sier (1988, 69).

[20]In this case ἀλλά is found at the beginning of the fourth line because the first three look backwards.

[21]Thus in the kommos a variety of powers are concerned with this law: Zeus, Dike, the Moirai, the Erinys in 400ff.

[22]Cf. *Ag.* 1564 παθεῖν τὸν ἔρξαντα.

[23]Cf. Electra's question in 418 τί δ' ἂν φάντες τύχοιμεν; and the similar ones before the kommos begins (87-88, 91-92, 118), expressing her anxiety as to what is the right thing to say.

by the opposition of the spheres of light and darkness,[24] so it is important to use exactly the right words and ritual in order to achieve contact with the dead (for similar phrases cf. *Pers*. 633ff, *Ag*. 1489ff, *Or*. 1231ff). Garvie (1970, 82-83; 1986, xxxiii) remarks that in this kommos Aeschylus combines two conflicting but simultaneously held Greek beliefs about the dead (on a discussion of various such beliefs see Mikalson 1991, 114ff). On the one hand that they have a very insubstantial existence in Hades, taking no interest in the events of the upper world, so that prayers can reach them with difficulty (315ff), and on the other hand that they are powerful figures showing interest in the events of this world (324ff). In this stanza Orestes, drawing on the first belief, expresses his anxiety that Agamemnon is far away in Hades, so only a properly conducted γόος can bridge the gap between the two worlds, in particular a γόος εὐκλεής (321) which will be pleasing to Agamemnon.

In response, the chorus try to reassure Orestes that the φρόνημα of the dead remains intact (324-25) and redirect his thought from a γόος εὐκλεής to a γόος ἔνδικος (330), a lament that contains δίκη, is just. Its further characterization with the verb ματεύει (pointing to hunting imagery) and the participle ταραχθείς helps represent it almost as a living creature that is stirred up and requires punishment, thus pointing to its tremendous power. Lines 326-28 refer persistently to Agamemnon, the subject of all three clauses, emphasizing the theme of late justice (cf. also 61ff, 382ff). It will finally come, bringing light metaphorically (hence φαίνει, ἀναφαίνεται),[25] when the dead man[26] is properly roused by γόος and is thus able to harm his enemies.

Electra in turn (332 ἐν μέρει) tries to achieve communication with Agamemnon appealing to him to listen to their lament, which is personified, like the γόος in the previous stanza, with the use of ἀναστενάζει (335). She goes further than Orestes in trying to rouse the anger of the dead Agamemnon by describing their common misfortune (cf. her prayer in 130ff): they are suppliants and exiles alike at the tomb of their father, which thus functions as an altar (cf. 106). Literally speaking, Electra is not an exile, but exaggerations of this kind (cf. also 132, 254) help to stress the parallel fortunes

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[24]The imagery of light and darkness is important not only in this play but in the trilogy as a whole. See Peradotto (1964, 388-93), Fowler (1967, 64-65), Fagles (1975, 13-85 *passim*). As Peradotto (1964, 390-92) remarks, in terms of that imagery the action of *Cho*. is a struggle to bring light back to the house of Agamemnon.

[25]For the use of φαίνεσθαι to refer to the avenger cf. also *Cho*. 131, *Eum*. 320, S. *El*. 172, 846.

[26]Garvie (1986, on 327-31) remarks that ὁ θνήσκων is a 'timeless' present, chosen for the sake of symmetry with ὁ βλάπτων, which is potential since Agamemnon has not yet been aroused.

of brother and sister. In response, the coryphaeus takes up her ἐπιτύμβιος θρῆνος (334-35) as θρήνων ἐπιτυμβιδίων (342), converting it into a more hopeful sound (341 κελάδους εὐφθογγοτέρους), in particular a paean (343). In both cases the chorus redirect Orestes' and Electra's thoughts by exploiting their own phrases and images. The wish for the raising of a paean as well as of an ὀλολυγμός in 387 prepares for the choral song in 935ff (note also the verb ἐπολολύξατ' in 942).[27]

Despite the encouragement of the chorus, in the second triad Orestes and Electra do not look ahead to the future but express two unfulfilled wishes referring to the past. Orestes wishes that Agamemnon had died gloriously at Troy so that he would have been honoured with a conspicuous tomb and would have left glory to his children, a wish modelled on *Od*. 24. 30ff.[28] The chorus direct his thought into something more hopeful, the illustrious status of Agamemnon as a king in the underworld (354ff), which they emphasize with phrases such as ἐμπρέπων, σεμνότιμος ἀνάκτωρ,[29] πρόπολος...τυράννων. This interpretation is possible if we accept that the syntax of this stanza is independent of the previous one, in which case the chorus express a reality in contrast to Orestes' unreal wish.[30] So this stanza parallels the corresponding strophe in that they both comment on the status of the dead man, the first in more general, the second in specific terms. Of particular importance is also the person of the verbs in line 360 (whether second or third). Garvie (1986, on 360-2) accepts the third person (ἦν, ἔζη) on the grounds that the chorus nowhere else in the kommos (until 459ff) address Agamemnon directly. I think that this is preferable for the additional reason that the chorus' emotional distance as they talk about Agamemnon is in contrast with the preceding and following addresses to him, as in the previous triad.

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[27]Haldane (1965, 37-39) notices that in the *Oresteia* every victory, whether recounted or represented in the drama, is marked by the raising of the ὀλολυγή or the paean. However, it always contains within it the seeds of disaster, so the paean leads inevitably to the θρῆνος. Finally in *Eum.* the true meaning of paean and ὀλολυγή, which was distorted in the two previous plays, is restored.

[28]There are some specific Homeric reminiscences in the phrasing of this triad: κατηναρίσθης (347) recalls the Homeric verb ἐναρίζειν, ὄφρα (360) is common in Homer but rare in tragedy, used only in lyrics, φθίμενος (364) is an epic participle.

[29]σεμνότιμος is used elsewhere only in *Eum*. 833, where it is applied to the Erinyes. For ἀνάκτωρ cf. S. *El*. 841 πάμψυχος ἀνάσσει (describing the status of Amphiaraus in the underworld).

[30]See Garvie (1986, on 354-62).

Uninfluenced by the chorus' words Electra complements Orestes' wish by correcting it: she wishes that not Agamemnon but his murderers instead had perished, so she first aims words at the killers.[31] The close correspondence between her and Orestes' thought is stressed by the verbal similarities in their utterances: ὑπὸ Τρωίας (363) recalls ὑπ' Ἰλίῳ (345), δουρικμῆτι (365) picks up δορίτμητος (347), a *hapax*.

The epirrhema following the third antistrophe (372-79) is almost twice as long as the previous and the subsequent ones (340ff, 400ff), which shows its great importance. The first three lines look back to Electra's wish while the second part of the epirrhema (375ff) brings the discussion to the present reality. Sense and punctuation in 375ff are disputed. If we take with Bowen (1986, on 375) διπλῆς γάρ...ἱκνεῖται as an explanatory parenthesis, the double lash (διπλῆ μαράγνη) is the γόος of the children,[32] and the coryphaeus reassures them that it reaches Agamemnon (a theme continued from 324ff).[33] In this case, which I find more likely, the coryphaeus continues his reassurance with the μέν- and δέ- clauses (376ff), emphasizing the opposition between the situation of Orestes and Electra, who are gaining Agamemnon's aid, and that of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra, who are thus in a disadvantageous position.

Orestes and Electra, having finally caught the point of all the previous lecturing of the chorus - as Orestes says in 380-81, it pierces his ear like an arrow - wish for vengeance in their next two utterances. He invokes Zeus Chthonios commenting on the late-coming justice (382ff),[34] without, however, recognizing the part he himself must play in the act of vengeance, and concludes his stanza with the ambiguous phrase τοκεῦσι δ' ὅμως τελεῖται (385). The meaning of τοκεῦσι is much-disputed.[35] I find attractive Lebeck's suggestion (1971, 118) that it refers indiscriminately to both Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, in which case, as Garvie (1986, on 382-5) remarks, this is the first passage in the play where Orestes distinguishes her

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[31]The exact content of her wish, especially the manner of death she wishes for Agamemnon's murderers, is much-disputed. For some views see Garvie (1986, on 367-71), Sier (1988, on 367ff.), Georgantzoglou (1990).

[32]Tucker (1901, on 374) suggests that this idea is emphasized with the beating of the breast and the ground by brother and sister on either side of the tomb. For the beating of the earth to stir the dead cf. also *Pers.* 683, E. *El.* 678.

[33]For a different interpretation of this phrase see Garvie (1986, on 375-9).

[34]For ὑστερόποινον ἄταν (383) cf. *Ag.* 58-59 ὑστερόποινον...Ἐρινύν.

[35]For the different opinions suggested see Lebeck (1971, 118), Garvie (1986, on 382-5).

from Aegisthus as the object of his punishment,[36] while he directs his anger to her alone for the first time in 434ff. In the following choral stanza the chorus, employing musical imagery as in 340ff (cf. 387 ὀλολυγμόν),[37] indulge once more in wishful thinking, expressing the wish, now for the first time explicitly,.that Aegisthus and Clytemnestra may be killed. It is the first time that a clear distinction between the two murderers is drawn, so they take further Orestes' implication in τοκεῦσι (385).

Responding to Orestes' previous stanza, in the corresponding antistrophe (394ff)[38] Electra appeals to Zeus and the chthonic powers for vengeance, expressing more savage feelings than him (cf. 396 κάρανα δαΐξας), but, likewise, without hinting at any personal involvement in it. The last epirrhema (400-4) responds to Electra's preceding demand for justice, as the coryphaeus reassures her that there is such a law, vividly presented in the image of blood itself making demands (401 προσαιτεῖν picks up ἀπαιτῶ from 398). However, since there is no reference to divine powers, the suggestion is that this law has to be acted out by human agents. This anapaestic section repeats the vengeance-motif that was introduced in the first one (306ff), again as a generalization, which, likewise, has ominous implications (especially ominous is the reference to the Erinys in 402).

The despair Orestes exhibits in his following stanza, especially in the question concluding it (408-9), has been interpreted variously. Lebeck (1971, 199, n. 13) suggests that it concerns not only the external circumstances, i.e. the lack of means to accomplish the deed, but also the inner dilemma Orestes faces. It is the nether powers, the curses of the dead he invokes at the beginning of his utterance,[39] that are responsible for this dilemma, so he calls upon Zeus to help him. His despair is reinforced by ποποῖ δᾶ (405), the

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[36]In the previous scenes she and Aegisthus are usually referred to together in the plural (cf. 117 τοῖς αἰτίοις, 144 τοὺς κτανόντας, 273 τοὺς αἰτίους, 367 οἱ κτανόντες, 377 τῶν κρατούντων). See Lebeck (1971, 116), who sees a progressive realization in the kommos of the deed of vengeance as matricide.

[37]ὀλολυγμός was associated especially with women and had sacrificial associations (for a detailed discussion of the word see Diggle 1994b, 477-80). Garvie (1986, on 386-9) argues that its use here indicates that the killing of the murderers is probably envisaged as a ritual sacrifice.

[38]The parallelism between the two utterances is emphasized by verbal echoes: 381 βέλος ~ 395 βάλοι, 382 Ζεῦ Ζεῦ ~ 396 φεῦ φεῦ.

[39]πολυκρατεῖς 'Αραί (406) makes an effective contrast with the helplessness of Orestes and Electra.

dochmiacs in 406 and the neuter τὰ λοίπ' (407), δωμάτων ἄτιμα (408), which add pathos to his utterance.[40] The tone of the following choral stanza is in sharp contrast with their previous encouragement of the two siblings, as now they are moved by Orestes' lament. They express their own anxiety with vivid metaphors such as πέπαλται...κῆρ (410),[41] σπλάγχνα κελαινοῦται (413-14), imagery sharply contrasted with that employed in the corresponding strophe 388ff to depict their relentless ἔγκοτον στύγος (392). However, they seem to regain their confidence towards the end of the stanza (415-17), although the text there is beyond restoration.

Electra's aporia τί δ' ἂν φάντες τύχοιμεν; (418) introducing her following stanza concludes the first section of the kommos in the same way it started (cf. Orestes' similar question in 315ff), while her next question ἢ...τεκομένων;[42] (418-19) looks forward to the second section, preparing for the narrative account that will follow. Thus this stanza is the transitional point between the two sections. The question whether Electra's introductory utterance, and subsequently the narrative section of the kommos, are meant to be addressed to Agamemnon or Orestes, is disputed. Lebeck (1971, 120-21) summarizes the two views, concluding that they should be joined together: "In form and content the second part of the commos resembles the ritual of an *anakletikos hymnos*; however, the old form is put to new purpose. Motifs associated with invocation to the dead are used here to rouse the living." Similarly, Garvie (1986, on 418-19) argues that in the first instance the narrative is intended to rouse Agamemnon but its purpose changes as it progresses, so it is finally directed at Orestes. Ultimately, as Conacher (1974b, 339) suggests, the ambiguity as to the actual addressee of this section may be intentional.

In this part of the kommos the responsion of the utterances of Orestes and Electra is abandoned, since their roles are no longer parallel. Now Electra's stanzas correspond to those of the chorus since they have parallel tasks, to inform Orestes of the horrors of Agamemnon's murder and her sufferings. Being the focus of their attention, he delivers a single stanza (corresponding to a choral one), which is, however, of critical importance,

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[40]That this is a cry of total despair and not simply a request for divine help (as the appeals in 130ff, 246ff) is obvious, as Garvie (1986, on 410-17) argues, from the fact that this is the only place in the kommos (until its very end) where the chorus fail in reassuring the two siblings.

[41]This phrase has Homeric associations: see Schnyder (1995, 135), Bowen (1986, on 410).

[42]The plural is again unspecified. Young (1971, 308) may be right in suggesting that it means the mother and the stepfather.

since he makes explicit for the first time in the kommos his decision to kill Clytemnestra.

This section begins with a description by the chorus of their wild, oriental-like dirge (cf. 423-24 ἔκοψα κομμὸν Ἄριον...Κισσίας...ἰηλεμιστρίας[43]), which is represented as a "professional competence at mourning".[44] Their demonstrative gestures are expressed with three unusual, compound epithets (see p. 83) and with words pointing to noise (427 κτύπῳ, ἐπερρόθει, 428 κροτητόν) and stretching-out movements (426-27 ὀρέγματα ἄνωθεν ἀνέκαθεν). Movement, dance and music must contribute to a powerful scene while, as Bowen (1986, on 423) remarks, the steady beat of the iambic trimeter is appropriate to an insistent, monotonous lament. The interpretation of the aorist ἔκοψα is puzzling. It has been suggested that it refers to the present,[45] to the recent past (the parodos)[46] or to the distant past (the time of Agamemnon's murder).[47] Perhaps, since we are in the narrative section of the kommos, it is better to prefer the third suggestion; the continuation of Electra's narrative in the next stanza and the description of her own mourning in ant. η, which thus responds to that of the chorus in str. η, reinforces this view. However, the chorus by performing these gestures in the present doubtless re-enact their mourning in the past, recalling the similar scene of the parodos as well (especially since the rhythm in both passages is iambic), so it seems that the aorist was intended to be taken ambivalently.[48]

In the next stanza Electra focuses on the dishonour Agamemnon suffered after his murder by the πάντολμος (430)[49] Clytemnestra, namely, that he was buried without the presence of citizens and the customary mourning. Now Clytemnestra is the sole focus of attention while Aegisthus is completely ignored. In ant. ι the chorus continue Electra's description of the

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[43]Cf. the reference to the Kissian wailing in *Pers*. 120ff.

[44]Bowen (1986, on 424). He also argues (on 423) that its double illustration is probably employed to denote its strikingly extravagant character.

[45]E.g. by Sommerstein (1980, 66-67). For similar instantaneous aorists referring to lamentation cf. *Sept*. 835, E. *Supp*. 1160, *Hel*. 673.

[46]E.g. Lloyd-Jones (1970, 33, on 423).

[47]E.g. Garvie (1986, on 423-8).

[48]As Goldhill (1984, 148) remarks, "once more the openness of the reference allows the implication of the repetition of events: Electra, however, recalls the non-burial of Agamemnon, which suggests a narrowing of reference."

[49]This idea is repeated in ἔτλας (433). For the same characterization of Clytemnestra cf. *Ag*. 1237 παντότολμος, 1542 τλήσῃ.

outrageous way Agamemnon's body was treated, by referring to the mutilation it suffered from Clytemnestra, ἐμασχαλίσθη (439).[50] In ant. η Electra compares the dishonour she suffered with that of Agamemnon,[51] recalling the occasion of the funeral when she was not allowed to pay the tribute due to her dead father, being confined in the interior of the palace (446 μυχῷ δ' ἄφερκτος, an idea rounded off in κεκρυμμένα, 449). With this account she fulfils her promise in 418-19 of describing her suffering. Her solo mourning in a secluded space is in contrast to the chorus' group mourning, probably in an outer space, as described in the corresponding stanza, so the expression of their grief frames the narrative proper.[52]

The position of lines 434-38, which constitute Orestes' first clear promise in the kommos to kill Clytemnestra, is decisive for the question whether he remains constant in his resolution throughout it or not. Schadewaldt (1932), who argues for the first, agrees (345-46) with the ms order, i.e. that this stanza comes after line 433. In that case Orestes' decision is stated in the middle of this section, while the chorus and Electra continue their narrative only to show that Clytemnestra's death, as announced by him, is well-deserved. On the other hand, Wilamowitz (1914, 205-10) followed by Lesky (1943, 101) proposes to transpose the lines after 455, in which case Orestes needs to listen to a longer list of past crimes in order to be strengthened in his decision.[53] Garvie (1986, on 423-55) summarizes the arguments for and against transposition showing, persuasively I think, that there is no conclusive reason for it. Therefore it is better to retain the ms location, accepting that Orestes has taken his decision before the kommos begins, but that he states it explicitly in this place motivated by the additional information he receives about Agamemnon's dishonour. Lines 436-37 (two rhyming and metrically identical cola) emphasize the juxtaposition of divine and human will (reinforced by anaphora), this being the first time in the kommos that Orestes points clearly to his personal involvement in the deed of vengeance. If we accept ἕρεξας, τείσεις in 434, 435 respectively (Herwerden's

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[50]Cf. S. *El.* 445. For this practice see Garvie (1986, on 439).

[51]The idea of dishonour is a key-theme in this part of the kommos: 434 ἀτίμως, 435 ἀτίμωσιν, 443 ἀτίμους, 445 ἄτιμος (cf. also 408 ἄτιμα in the first section), pervading the whole play as well (see Macleod 1982b, 141).

[52]Similarly, in the kommos of *Pers.* the narration of the death of the Persian leaders is placed between descriptions of mourning.

[53]For a reference to some other critics defending and others rejecting this shift see Scott (1984, 202, n. 95).

suggestions instead of ἔλεξας, τίσει of M), Orestes' desire for revenge is presented in a more passionate way since he aims his words directly at Clytemnestra.

The third section of the kommos is its climax, as the direct appeal to Agamemnon for help, so long postponed, is finally accomplished. The sharing of the strophic pair among the three participants quickens the pace of the exchange and shows complete unanimity (στάσις πάγκοινος, as the chorus term it in 458). Orestes takes the lead, Electra follows and the chorus conclude the stanzas with a much longer utterance.[54] The strophe is rounded off by Orestes' appeal to Agamemnon (456 ξυγγενοῦ πάτερ φίλοις)[55] and the chorus' balanced response (460), while his utterance in the antistrophe (461 Ἄρης Ἄρει ξυμβαλεῖ, Δίκᾳ Δίκα), with its chiastic arrangement and the juxtaposition of two polyptota, summarizes the nature of the struggle to come: Ares as well as Justice will be on both sides. Garvie (1986, on 461) comments on the ominous implications of the suggestion (the first such in *Cho.*) that Clytemnestra can claim justice on her side. Joining her voice with Orestes', Electra asks for justice from the gods (462),[56] while the chorus express a shudder of horror for the doom that is to come (463ff), surprisingly after all their previous exhortations towards vengeance.

The tone of foreboding the chorus express in 463-65 continues into the final strophic pair, in effect a lament for the fate of the house. The strophe contains nothing but exclamatory phrases reflecting the anxiety of the chorus, which culminates in the last two lines (469-70) with the comment about the unending troubles of the house. Like other passages in the kommos, several references in this stanza are ambivalent. So ἄτα (467) can refer either to Clytemnestra's or Orestes' ruin, αἱματόεσσα πλαγά (468) can denote the stroke inflicted on Agamemnon as well as that which Clytemnestra will suffer. The ominous musical implications of παράμουσος (467), 'discordant', if πλαγά is taken to mean the blow on a musical instrument, and of δύστονα (469), if derived ambiguously from τείνω, 'to stretch the chords', or from

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[54]It is characteristic that throughout the kommos Orestes is assigned only strophes, thus initiating the musical and metrical pattern followed by Electra in the first and the chorus in the second section. That may indicate that he is not such a weak character as his utterances show, and may anticipate his leading role after the kommos.

[55]This appeal recalls the one to Hermes and Zeus in the prologue, γενοῦ σύμμαχος (2, 19 respectively).

[56]Goldhill (1984, 149) remarks that ἐνδίκως (462), with the implication of a single standard of δίκη, contradicts Δίκᾳ Δίκα of the previous line.

στένω,[57] are ironically contrasted with the joyful paean and the ὀλολυγμός the chorus had anticipated in 343 and 387 respectively.[58] The antistrophe seems to have a more hopeful tone in the sense that it accepts the possibility of healing. Cure can be attained only from within the house (471 ἔμμοτον) since it concerns a πόνος ἐγγενής (466), but it will involve a bloody strife (474 αἱματηράν recalls αἱματόεσσα from 468). The kommos concludes with three anapaestic lines introduced with ἀλλά like the previous epirrhemas, which give a more optimistic turn to the preceding foreboding, as they appeal to the nether gods[59] for victory (in fact, νίκη is the very last word of the kommos). The alliteration of π in the last two lines marks the end of the kommos with a distinctive musical effect (cf. the same alliterative effect in *Sept.* 1000ff).

The final strophic pair with the anapaestic lines that follow interrupt the appeal to Agamemnon (456-65), which continues with renewed intensity in Orestes' and Electra's spoken iambics after the end of the kommos (479-509).[60] Although some critics find this interruption disconcerting,[61] it must have a specific importance: Orestes and Electra have reached a high degree of excitement in appealing to Agamemnon, so they are unaffected by the forebodings of the chorus and continue their appeal undiminished; by contrast the chorus, having exhorted them in that direction, can now withdraw. The long iambic appeal to Agamemnon develops, in a rapid exchange, the short lyric one. Orestes, fully determined now, takes the lead while Electra answers complementing his utterances, so that their tightly-woven pairs recall their corresponding stanzas in the kommos.[62] This iambic

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[57]For these adjectives see Tucker (1901, on 465, 467), Silk (1974, 110), Garvie (1986, on 466-8, 469-70). For δύστονα κήδη cf. *Sept.* 984, 998 (this adjective is found only in Aeschylus).

[58]Haldane (1965, 40) points to the importance of the musical imagery in Aeschylus, where it is used "to reveal the deeper meaning of the drama", and not simply, as in Sophocles and Euripides, "to enhance the effectiveness of the plot and to strengthen the emotional impact made on the audience." On the prominent role of music in Aeschylus see Moutsopoulos (1959).

[59]μάκαρες χθόνιοι (476) has been taken to mean the chthonic gods or Agamemnon himself. Perhaps the phrase is deliberately ambiguous so as to denote both. For a further discussion see Garvie (1986, on 476-8).

[60]For a similar appeal to Agamemnon in iambic trimeters cf. E. *El.* 671-84, *Or.* 1225-45, both shared among Orestes, Electra and a third character who takes the role of the chorus, the old man and Pylades respectively.

[61]See, for example, Scott (1984, 93-94).

[62]In two cases, however, Orestes develops what Electra has just said (493, 503).

exchange presents remarkable symmetry. In its central stichomythic piece (489-96) the appeal reaches its climax with the intense invocations of Earth and Persephone, the calling upon Agamemnon to remember the manner of his murder (which was omitted from the narrative section of the kommos) and to rise from his tomb. All this is marked by symmetrical, antiphonal utterances, which recall the strophic correspondences of the kommos: the vocatives followed by imperatives in 489-90, the repetition of μέμνησο at the beginning of 491-92 followed by relative clauses, the matching datives in 493-94, the repetition of ἆρ' at the beginning of 495-96. The urgency of the invocation is marked by the repetition of πάτερ throughout it: 479, 481, 491, 493, 495, 500. After the trimeter invocation the dramatic pace quickens significantly, as the plan for revenge is devised and put into action. However, the emotional preparation given in the kommos is more important since it summons and gains the help of the forces required for the execution of the plan, thus ensuring its success.

II. SOPHOCLES

1. *AJAX*

348-429

After Tecmessa's extensive ἀγγελία of the affliction that befell Ajax (284ff), it is time to see the hero himself. We saw him mad in the prologue, now we will see him sane. His appearance is prepared in a long scene (333-47) where his off-stage cries (333, 336, 339) and a more articulate iambic couplet (342-43) are commented upon by Tecmessa and the chorus so that his prolonged delay creates a mood of suspense before the *ekkyklema* is finally pushed out to reveal him,[1] probably surrounded by some of the slaughtered animals.

In the kommos that follows all the lyric parts are attributed to Ajax, contrasted with the iambic trimeters of Tecmessa and the coryphaeus, a division which not only depicts emphatically the clash between their views and personalities but also shows that Ajax, by dominating the lyric part of the kommos, silences any possible attempts of the other two participants to express themselves in a similar way. Ajax's stanzas are of increasing length, marked by intense emotion, as reflected in the choice of metre (mainly iambo-dochmiac with some choriambs in the first and second pair) and the echoing of the cries ἰώ (348=356, 394=412) and αἰαῖ αἰαῖ=ἰώ μοί μοι (370=385). By contrast, the comments of Tecmessa and the coryphaeus are constantly confined to two trimeters at the end of each stanza. In the second pair they also manage to interrupt Ajax's lyrics half way through, but they are unable to repeat that in the third set of stanzas before his passionate utterances, whose length transforms the kommos almost into a monody. Burton (1980, 20) and Gardiner (1987, 51-52) comment on the role of the chorus before Ajax's appearance (348) as that of an actor fully participating in the development of the action. However, when Ajax appears his greatness overshadows them, so their role is reduced, confined to some brief, trivial comments.

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[1]Most scholars accept the use of the *ekkyklema* in this scene. See Jebb (1896, on 346f.), Kamerbeek (1953, on 346), Taplin (1977, 443), Gardiner (1987, 61, n. 22), Ewans (1999, 183). For a different view see Stanford (1963, on 348ff.).

There is a close bond between Ajax and the Salaminian sailors: they come from his native land, serve on his ship and have shared with him the hardships of long years of war. Thus it is no wonder that before his entrance Tecmessa asks them to help him (328ff) and when he appears he indeed turns to them for help. At the beginning of his first strophe he addresses them as his only friends and companion sailors, stressing their loyalty to his friendship (349-50), and calls them to look at his suffering (351-53). Similarly, in the corresponding stanza he addresses them with an elaborate phrase, stressing once again the close relationship between them (357-58), and directs a passionate appeal to them for help (359-60),[2] explained in his following request to kill him (361). The chorus are appalled by the sight he presents, so in his first couplet (354-55) the coryphaeus does not even address him but turns to Tecmessa instead, admitting that she was right in what she said about his situation. As for his second request, he receives it with horror, trying to avert a new disaster (362-63).

After his elaborate addresses to the chorus in the first pair, in the second strophe Ajax addresses them with a simple ὁρᾷς (364), expressing his shame at the fact that he, a bold, mighty warrior, has turned his wrath against unprotected animals (364-66). What he is most ashamed of is that he is being mocked by his enemies (367), a notion he also insists on in the corresponding verse of the antistrophe (382), there with specific reference to Odysseus,[3] whom he attacks in the greatest part of that stanza in language derived, as Burton (1980, 21) remarks, from the market-place: κακοπινέστατόν τ' ἄλημα (381), τὸν αἰμυλώτατον, ἐχθρὸν ἄλημα (388-89). Tecmessa appeals to him almost like a suppliant (368 λίσσομαί σε), trying to avert his mind from this thought but Ajax, who had ignored her presence completely at the beginning

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[2]Cf. the repetition σέ τοι σέ τοι (359). Throughout the first pair Ajax stresses that these sailors are the only ones he can look to for help with the repetition of μόνοι (349, 350), μόνον (359), φίλοι, φίλων (349; cf., similarly, the repeated addresses of Oedipus to the chorus in *O.T.* 1321, 1329, 1343), and the employment of the phrase γένος...ἀρωγόν (357), which recalls Tecmessa's ναὸς ἀρωγοί (201).

[3]Although the spectators know that this is not true: in the parodos Odysseus not only did not laugh at Ajax but pitied him. Ajax himself was laughing in his madness while thinking that he was torturing the Atreidae and Odysseus (303). What the heroic code cannot bear is being laughed at by enemies, which the heroes imagine at moments of despair. This idea is constantly repeated in *Aj.*: 79, 454, 957-58, 961, 969, 988-89, 1042-43. Cf., similarly, *Eum.* 789=819, S. *El.* 1153, *Ant.* 839, *Phil.* 258, 1023, 1125, *Med.* 383, 797, 1049-50.

of the kommos, rebukes her harshly (369).[4] In fact, this is the only case he replies to any of the admonitions of his interlocutors, ignoring all their other attempts to advise him (cf. their repeated imperatives in 362-63, 368, 371, 386). Even when after the end of his singing he composes himself to set forth his arguments in an iambic speech (430ff), he still does not respond to them. So after ignoring the advice for σωφροσύνη (371),[5] he turns to himself (372 ὦ δύσμορος),[6] expressing his regret at having failed to kill his enemies (372-76). Similarly, in the corresponding part of the antistrophe he wishes he could kill Odysseus and the Atreidae and then die himself (387-91).

The fact that he has ceased addressing the chorus shows that he is growing increasingly isolated from them. They have tried to help him, as he had asked them, but the practical advice they give is not what he had expected to hear, so the relationship between them quickly worsens, as he feels that they cannot understand him and becomes absorbed in his own thoughts. His isolation from the people who could support him is more emphatic especially after his reference to the feelings of devotion and loyalty between them. Therefore he does not take into account the advice of the coryphaeus to face the present situation (377-78) nor his moderate statement that god is responsible for joy or calamity (383)[7] and continues his attack on Odysseus (384). The coryphaeus assumes that Ajax will utter a curse (cf. *Phil.* 1113ff ἰδοίμαν δέ νιν...) and tries to interrupt him (386 μηδὲν μέγ' εἴπῃς).[8]

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[4]The phrasing of this verse (οὐκ ἐκτός; οὐκ ἄψορρον...;) indicates that Tecmessa was trying to approach him physically on the *ekkyklema* during her previous appeal.

[5]The attribution of this verse has been questioned. The manuscripts give it to the chorus, which, according to Jebb (1896, on 371), is right, since he believes that Tecmessa would not dare speak after Ajax's former rebuke. However, McDevitt (1981) has shown that in the Sophoclean amoibaia when the parts of two speakers are reversed in two corresponding stanzas, there is always absolute consistency in the division between them, and so he argues (22-23) that 371 must be given to Tecmessa, so that her part is naturally taken up by the coryphaeus in the antistrophe (386). In addition, it is more appropriate for Tecmessa to cry πρὸς θεῶν, an exclamation more touching than one would expect from this chorus (see Kamerbeek 1953, on 371).

[6]For ὦ plus nominative see p. 91.

[7]For similar ideas see p. 121.

[8]Commentators usually compare this phrase with S. *El.* 830 μηδὲν μέγ' ἀΰσῃς, supposing that the chorus try to prevent the actor from uttering an irreverent word that can incur divine wrath. Exceptionally, Gardiner (1987, 62, n. 23 and 152, n. 23) argues that the two phrases have a different meaning.

Unaffected by this appeal for restraint he continues his thought and, also leaving Tecmessa's appeal (392-93) unanswered, proceeds to sing a longer lyric piece. Neither Tecmessa nor the coryphaeus has managed to divert his train of thought.

The structure of the kommos shows that Ajax is in full control of it. In the third pair his language regains the dignity it had lost in the second one.[9] His thoughts move away from those around him and his enemies in addresses first to the elements of nature (strophe) and then to his natural surroundings (antistrophe), indicating in both cases his desire to die. In the strophe the urgency of his appeal is emphasized by the repetition of ἔλεσθε (396-97) and the oxymoron that darkness is light for him (394-95), which has been explained in various ways. So Musurillo, who remarks (1967, 9) that light and darkness constitute one of the prevalent images in the play, argues (10-11) that under these notions Ajax recognizes the two contradicting sides of his personality. Burton (1980, 22), on the other hand, thinks that this confusion reflects the turmoil in his mind. However, I think that Scott (1996, 76-78) is right in arguing that Ajax's stanzas show his increasing ability to perceive his situation clearly. From the state of pitying himself and asking for help, he has now moved to a clearer understanding of his position and sees that death is the only option left to him, thus perceiving it in a way that seems to be an oxymoron because it is his only deliverance. He explains this in the rest of his stanza. He can expect nothing good either from the gods or the mortals any longer (397-400): Athena has destroyed him (401-3), he will soon be killed by the Greeks (408-9) and there is therefore no means of escape for him (note his anxious questions in 404 with the anaphoric repetition of ποῖ).

In the antistrophe Ajax turns exclusively to the neighbouring territories, the sea, the sea-caves, the pastures of Troy (412-13) and Scamander (418-19).[10] He speaks to the natural surroundings because there is nobody else he can speak to: both gods and men are his enemies (as he has stated in the previous stanza), and his close friends cannot understand him. On the other hand it is as if he addresses them for the last time since he makes evident his intention to commit suicide (414ff, especially 416-17, 421-22).[11] He concludes his utterance by contrasting his previous greatness, proudly renounced in

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[9]See Burton (1980, 21), Poe (1987, 71).

[10]For similar addresses see p. 93.

[11]οὐ μή with subjunctive (421-22) gives a strong emphasis (Jebb 1896, on 421f.) while the use of the third person (421ff), which Ajax uses elsewhere as well (98, 864), gives a loftier tone to his utterance (Stanford 1963, on 426-7).

422-26, with his present dishonourable situation, τανῦν δ' ἄτιμος ὧδε πρόκειμαι (426-27), words "symbolic of what he feels may happen to his corpse".[12] Ajax has lost his τιμή, which is what is worth living for in the heroic world, and feels as if already dead (πρόκειμαι is used of the dead who lie exposed).

His soliloquy is interrupted by Tecmessa (410-11), who now addresses herself (ὦ δυστάλαινα), expressing her despair that Ajax is unlike his previous self (cf. also 317-20). The form of her expression, accusative plus infinitive (τοιάδ'...φωνεῖν), is a highly affective exclamation,[13] while she deliberately calls him χρήσιμον, pointing back to 405 (his services to the army), which would be a motive for him to continue living.[14] In the choral couplet that concludes Ajax's song (428-29) the coryphaeus acknowledges his complete inability to converse with him any longer and gives up.[15] We are far from the expectations of a traditional kommos, where the voices of the participants are united for a common purpose.

By contrast, what is emphatically depicted in this exchange is the conflict between the mourner and his interlocutors. Ajax laments the loss of his τιμή while the chorus and Tecmessa try to advise him on practical matters. Thus, it is soon realized by both parties that there cannot be real communication between them, so Ajax pursues his own train of thought without responding to them, while they soon give up their attempts to advise him: in the third pair Tecmessa speaks to herself and the coryphaeus expresses only his bewilderment. Through this conflict the ordinary, weak men, concerned chiefly about practical issues, act as a foil to Ajax's greatness, who is concerned to maintain his honour by killing himself.

In this kommos, then, we see Ajax's view of his deed. He feels no guilt for his assault - Odysseus and the Atreidae were his enemies since they denied him the τιμή due to him, and so according to the heroic code he had to harm them. He is grieved only about his bad luck in slaughtering the animals instead of them. The only way to make up for his failure and to preserve his τιμή is to die; in 417 he claims that any man who is sane (φρονῶν) will agree with that. This appears again as his only option in his iambic speech (430ff),

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[12]Burton (1980, 23). He also suggests (22) that after uttering these words Ajax "falls amid the carnage like a cast out corpse", thus enacting what he has already said.

[13]See Kamerbeek (1953, on 410, 411).

[14]Stanford (1963, on 410).

[15]As Stanford (1963, on 428-9) remarks, the full antithesis in these verses shows the utter helplessness of the chorus.

where he considers carefully all the possibilities left to him.[16] Simpson (1969) sees in the play the transformation of Ajax from a doer of deeds to a speaker of words, defining three stages in this process, "first as a man of violent action, then as passive and wailing after he recovers his sanity, finally as the Ajax who uses reason and discourse to achieve the vision of reality which justifies his suicide" (93), which, he argues, correspond roughly to his appearance in the prologue, then in the kommos and finally from 433ff up to 865. However, as has already been stated, the kommos shows a gradual process from a helpless Ajax pointing to his predicament (first pair) to an evaluation of his deed (second pair) and finally to an estimation of the results and taking of decisions (third pair). Accordingly his stanzas grow longer as his thought develops, continuing in the iambic speech, so that at the end of it the coryphaeus recognizes that now Ajax speaks totally from his own mind (482 τῆς σαυτοῦ φρενός), in contrast to Tecmessa's previous realizations (317-20, 410-11).

201-262, 879-973

If this kommos enacts the greatness of Ajax in comparison with lesser, ordinary men, in those which precede and follow it (201-262, 879-973) his importance in their lives is stressed through his absence. These two kommoi can be examined together since the circumstances under which they occur have a mirroring effect. The first one comes after the parodos in which the Salaminian sailors expressed their fears about the rumours that Ajax slaughtered the cattle of the Achaeans, and in its last stanza (192ff) appealed to him to appear and resolve their anxieties. However, instead of him Tecmessa appears to inform them of his situation and confirm their fears. The second kommos follows the re-entry of the chorus after Ajax's suicide (866ff), which presents marked signs of agitation, in contrast to the solemn anapaestic parodos, mirrored in the divided entry of the chorus and their movement about the orchestra, as they look desperately for Ajax. However, instead of him Tecmessa appears again as a messenger, this time to report a more

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[16]As Knox (1964, 34-36) remarks, the desire for death is frequent in Sophocles, and several times it is realized in the form of suicide. "It is no accident that the plays of Sophocles contain so many suicides... The world as it is, life as it is lived, refuses them freedom to be what they are, and they are ready to leave it rather than to change." (42)

terrible disaster, the death of Ajax, so she cannot compose herself to deliver the stately anapaests she did in 201ff; instead, now her first utterances are interjections of grief (891, 893).

In both cases the chorus receive the news expressing fear for the future. In the first kommos they fear death by stoning (254-56), in the second their first thought is that their νόστος is at risk (900). The Salaminian sailors are weak men, completely dependent on Ajax without whose protection they are defenceless (cf. 137ff, 165ff). Like the chorus, Tecmessa is utterly destroyed by Ajax's death (896), considering the enslavement that awaits her and her son (944-45). Whereas at the end of the first kommos Tecmessa has managed to calm the agitation of the chorus, however wrong they may be in their estimation of Ajax's situation, at the end of the final kommos the tension has not been relaxed, but the chorus are prepared to face the new situation that Ajax has created with his death. Thus these two kommoi start the two distinct sections of the play, the first dominated by Ajax's presence, the second by his dead body.

2. *ELECTRA* 121-250

In S. *El.* the heroine dominates the play. She is a constant presence on stage, and thus the centre of attention, for some 1400 lines, from her first appearance (line 86) till the very end of the play, with the exception of the third stasimon (1384-97) during which she withdraws in the palace. She is situated outside the doors of the palace (cf. 108-9, 328, 518), lamenting for Agamemnon and expressing her resistance to the tyranny of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra. Her loud cries constitute a threat to the political and social order (cf. 641-42), so it is not surprising that Aegisthus considers shutting her up in a rocky cavern (381-82).[1] According to Sophocles' habit of presenting characters paired so as to emphasize the conflict between them, Electra's personality is unfolded in depth through her successive encounters with the chorus, Chrysothemis and Clytemnestra. However, before she is presented engaged in any sort of confrontation with other characters, it is important for the spectators to get a first picture of her while alone. This is achieved through her monody (86-120), which is a natural link between the prologue and the parodos.

The structure of the opening of the play, i.e. the division between characters who neither address one another nor occupy the stage together (first Orestes, Pylades and the Paedagogus, then Electra alone), is a feature unique in the extant Sophoclean tragedies but a device often used by Euripides (*Hipp.*, *Hec.*, *I.T.*, *Ion*, *Pho.*).[2] Scholars generally agree that the separation of brother and sister corresponds to the opposite traits they embody, the incompatible worlds they represent as male and female. Woodard (1964, 165ff) discusses extensively the contrast between male ἔργα and female λόγοι: Orestes, being confident and ambitious, plans and acts while Electra only moans and suffers passively. The difference between them is emphasized visually as well: Orestes is well-dressed, Electra in rags (this visual contrast will continue with the appearance of the chorus). Kitzinger (1991, 302ff) defines the duality of sexes rather in the contrast between male and female λόγοι: while Orestes uses language as a means to achieve his

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[1] The phrasing of these verses is strongly reminiscent of *Ant.* 773-74 where Creon announces the manner of Antigone's death.

[2] The successive appearances of brother and sister, with the former planning to act and the latter being concerned about his fate, is very similar to the prologue of *I.T.*

plans, for Electra it is a way of being, she is defined through it. The two different voices are merged when Electra's passionate cry ἰώ μοί μοι δύστηνος (77) with its long, heavy syllables interrupts Orestes' rational exposition of his course of action.[3]

Orestes recognizes Electra's voice, but urged by the Paedagogus to action, does not stay to overhear, as in the similar scene of E. *El.*, so the fact that there is nobody to listen to Electra's monody emphasizes her solitary mourning. Barner (1971, 284-85) stresses the greater importance a monody delivered at the beginning of a play has for the depiction of the *ethos* of a character (whether this is his first utterance or not), as compared with one delivered in another part of the play.[4] All the themes suggested in Electra's monody are developed in the parodos and in other parts of the play: the description of her mourning and the manner of Agamemnon's death, her intention not to cease lamenting, the comparison of herself with the nightingale, the prayer for revenge.[5] So by the end of her monody the spectators have all the clues that constitute her character.[6]

The concept of time, as Electra perceives it in her monody and the parodos, is, like all the other qualities she embodies, in contrast with that of Orestes and the Paedagogus in the prologue.[7] Whereas for them time is linear, meaning movement forward, for her it is static and does not mean any change.[8] Her days and nights are all the same, constituting an endless process of mourning, and she envisages the future in exactly the same way. Her emblems are the always wailing nightingale (107, 147-49),[9] who suits her

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[3]In contrast to this play which opens with two clearly different attitudes, in *Cho.* the voices of Orestes and Electra complement one another both before and during the great kommos.

[4]Similarly, Burton (1980, 189) argues that this device for the introduction of the principal actor "isolates his personality, increases the pathos of his situation, and evokes a heightened emotional response from audience and reader".

[5]This theme that was prompted in the kommos of *Cho.* mainly by the chorus is here enacted by Electra. Thus the focus has shifted from a communal prayer shared by the chorus and two actors to the prayer of an individual.

[6]Sophocles and Euripides are more interested in exploring Electra's character than in depicting the fate of the house of the Atreidae, as Aeschylus does, so her monody as well as the lyric exchange with the chorus serve this purpose.

[7]Woodard (1965, 196ff) gives an extensive discussion of the two different visions of time.

[8]Her constant, unmoving presence on the stage during almost the entire play embodies visually that quality.

[9]The chorus also liken her to the πάνδυρτος ἀηδών in the second stasimon 1075-77.

mental state (147 ἄραρεν φρένας) in that they are both distraught with grief (cf. 149 ὄρνις ἀτυζομένα,[10] 135 ἀλύειν for Electra), and the ever tearful Niobe (150-52), whom she considers a goddess because of her constancy in grief.[11] The term best applied to Electra's case is ἀεί (cf. 122, 141, 148, 165, 218, 1075).[12] To human beings who are subject to time and nothing in their life remains unchangeable this notion is not properly applied, thus she obtains a god-like quality, like Niobe.[13]

Seaford (1985), comparing Electra's mourning with ancient and modern mourning practices in Greece, shows that what is unusual about her case is the boundlessness of her lamentation. The period of mourning normally terminates at a specific time after death and the mourners are reincorporated into the everyday social life. Electra, on the contrary, insists on her lamentation beyond the socially accepted limits. As Seaford (1985, 318-20) remarks, her social exclusion or liminality corresponds visually to her staying outside the doors of the palace for almost the whole play while the punishment Aegisthus is thinking of imposing on her can be paralleled to certain penalties imposed by funerary legislation on women who ignored the restrictions on excessive manifestations of grief. Electra is alone in her defiant mourning for her father (cf. 100-1, 119-20 with the emphatic position of μούνη at the beginning of 119), starting her monody with an invocation of the natural elements (86-87) as witnesses of her many dirges and concluding it with an appeal to the nether powers (110ff) for help in the vengeance of Agamemnon's murder.

As Winnington-Ingram (1980, 224) notes, the parodos of this play together with the monody that precedes it constitute the longest lyric composition in Sophocles, which must have a special importance for the depiction of the relationship between Electra and the chorus. We cannot say

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[10]The chorus apply this participle to Andromache in *Andr.* 131 sympathizing with her grief but also reproaching her for useless resistance to necessity.

[11]The story of Niobe is a classic one of a mortal who incurred the wrath of the gods because of her presumption (see Whitman 1951, 93-94). However, her steadfastness in affliction made her divine, and this is how Sophocles treats her (cf. *Ant.* 834ff).

[12]Maybe we should also read with Jebb (1894) αἰεί in 152 referring to Niobe's perpetual grief, as αἰέν in 148 refers to the ever-lasting lament of the nightingale, although αἰαῖ gives an exact responsion between 152 and 136. The notion of time endlessly repeating itself is also stressed by Electra in her second kommos with the chorus, 851-52 παμμήνω...αἰῶνι.

[13]Timelessness is a characteristic quality of the θρῆνος of the Sophoclean Electra. In the Euripidean play ἀεί is referred once in her monody (145) but it is not given much emphasis.

with certainty when the chorus enter the orchestra, but we can assume that it probably happens while Electra still sings since, as their opening words show, they have heard at least some of her words. It would be an effective dramatic device if their appearance coincided with Electra's urgent invocation of the Erinyes in 115 (suggested by the asyndetic juxtaposition of ἔλθετ', ἀρήξατε, τείσασθε), which in a way would point to their role in helping her "to balance the counterweight of sorrow" (119-20).[14]

The chorus consists of noble women of Mycenae (129 γενέθλα γενναίων, 226 φιλία γενέθλα) with the status of citizens (1227 πολίτιδες).[15] This means that they share a social status similar to Electra's, and thus that they can advise her with some authority. Similarly, in E. *El.* the chorus, local country-women, suit the present position of the heroine as the wife of a farmer. The fact that in these plays Electra finds herself among women of a similar social environment has a specific importance because it marks her behaviour, namely, her insistence on excessive mourning and a life deprived of any joys, as standing out from the normal lives they lead. This serves to emphasize in both cases her misery and isolation, not only because of her exceptional behaviour but also because she is aware that her equals disapprove of it. In the Sophoclean play emphasis is placed on the mutual friendship between Electra and the chorus (cf. 134). She is assured of their sympathy and concern for her: she states that they have come to console and comfort her (cf. 130 παραμύθιον, 229 παράγοροι). On the other hand, the chorus express almost maternal feelings towards Electra, as is indicated in 234 μάτηρ ὡσεί τις πιστά and their addresses to her as παῖ (121, 827) and τέκνον (154, 174), and stress that they advise her with goodwill (233 εὐνοίᾳ γ' αὐδῶ). They also have common dislikes: in 126ff they wish death for Agamemnon's murderer,[16] although with some reserve (εἴ μοι θέμις τάδ' αὐδᾶν).[17]

The intimacy and friendship between Electra and the chorus are also reflected in the structure of the parodos.[18] In the strophic pairs the singers are

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[14]Similarly, in the parodos of *Hel.* the chorus arrive after Helen's invocation of the Sirens to accompany her lament (see pp. 251ff).

[15]For an extensive discussion of the social status and age of the chorus see Burton (1980, 186-87).

[16]Kells (1973, on 126f) has no doubt that ὁ τάδε πορών refers to Aegisthus, while Jebb (1894, on 123ff) and Kamerbeek (1974, on 126) argue that the masculine singular may include Clytemnestra as well.

[17]For a similar phrase cf. *Ant.* 1259.

[18]See Scott (1996, 152ff).

assigned roughly equal parts with Electra echoing closely the metres of the chorus, which shows a basic agreement between them. As Burton (1980, 190) puts it, "Electra and the chorus together explore the pathos of her predicament." However, in the epode things change. It is the first time in the parodos that the parts of the singers are unequal. After three anapaestic lines (spondaic paroemiacs) by the chorus Electra bursts into a much longer utterance employing a mixture of rhythms (dactylic, anapaestic, dochmiac, iambic), thus this time constructing her own song rather than continuing theirs. This reflects her disagreement with their views and her rejection of their advice. As Scott (1996, 156) remarks, "the women's music is stilled by her forceful tone; they are unable to continue the musical dialogue and reply in spoken iambics".[19]

Throughout the parodos the chorus try to restrain Electra's excessive grief by urging her to moderation, thus the contrast between their common-sense arguments and her obsession is emphasized. So the parodos takes the form of an *agon* where one character tries unsuccessfully to persuade another.[20] This is obvious in the iambic choral statement following the kommos where the coryphaeus admits defeat (252-53). As Burton (1980, 196) remarks, through this extensive confrontation with the chorus "the tragic depths of Electra's heart and mind are gradually disclosed before our eyes... None of the effects of this process...could have been so powerfully achieved by a conventional ode for the chorus alone." The role of the chorus is to drag Electra out of her lamentation and not to join her in it. However, they are moved by the depiction of her misery and join their voices with hers once, in the third strophe (193ff), where their lamenting anapaests recall those of her monody, but they soon return to their previous reproving, hortative tone (213ff). Therefore this kommos, like the parodos of the Euripidean *El.*, does not constitute a communal, shared lamentation in the manner of the kommos of *Cho.*, thus Electra stands isolated among the women of the chorus, who have come only to distract her from her mourning.

The Mycenean women start their lyric dialogue with Electra by expressing their disapproval of her excessive mourning (123 ἀκόρεστον

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[19]Linforth (1963, 93) holds a different view, that the epode expresses a decline in Electra's emotional situation, which the chorus perceive abandoning lyric expression, but I am not persuaded by his arguments.

[20]See Burton (1980, 195). This is the first in a series of *agones* that will follow, namely, with Chrysothemis and Clytemnestra, during which the action is stilled. Agonistic is also the spirit of the kommos in 823ff, especially in its first pair where the chorus try to console Electra.

οἰμωγάν). She is aware of her excesses (131-32 οἶδά τε καὶ ξυνίημι τάδ',..., 222 the stronger phrase ἔξοιδ', οὐ λάθει μ' ὀργά[21]) and, as she states later, feels shame for her conduct (cf. 254-55, 616-17), yet she is unwilling to give up lamenting (132-33).[22] In fact, as she explains in 221, 223-24,[23] it is a passionate compulsion for her: being surrounded by evils she has to react accordingly.[24] However, in the first strophe she does not defend her lamentation but merely asks the women to leave her perform her task (135-36).

On the other hand, in their next two stanzas the chorus try to show Electra that her lamentation leads her nowhere (140 ἐπ' ἀμήχανον, 142 ἀνάλυσις οὐδεμία, 144 τῶν δυσφόρων) with conventional commonplaces: she will not raise the dead with her γόοι (137ff), she is not the only one who has lost her father (153ff).[25] As Burton (1980, 191) remarks, there is a tone of rebuke in these statements, emphasized with οὗτοι (137, 153). What Electra opposes to the disapproval of the chorus is the ideal of filial piety (145-46), expressed in her constancy in grief for Agamemnon, which she exemplifies by applying to herself the legendary figures of Procne and Niobe (147ff). She returns to the theme of filial piety in the epode (237ff), where she presents her argument in terms of a natural law (238 ἔβλαστε). The chorus themselves, although they disagree with her attitude in the parodos, praise her for her devotion to her father in the second stasimon (cf. 1081 τίς ἂν εὔπατρις ὧδε βλάστοι;).

In the second strophe the chorus point to her extreme behaviour by contrasting it with the moderate way her sisters, Chrysothemis and Iphianassa, bear their grief, and try to encourage her with the thought of

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[21]The chorus in *Ant*. 875 use the same word to refer to Antigone's disposition.

[22]For the use of μὴ οὐ at the beginning of 133 cf. 107.

[23]Maybe we can trace a similar interpretation in 236, if we take κακότατος as in the sense of 'their wickedness' (see Kamerbeek 1974, on 236), in which case the meaning is: "There is no measure in their wickedness, so I have to behave accordingly." But perhaps it is better to understand κακότατος as 'my wretchedness' (see the translation of Jebb 1894), in which case Electra seems to say that there is no point in her plight where she can stop, as the chorus have suggested (so Winnington-Ingram 1980, 338).

[24]This idea is repeated in 256 and 308-9, at the beginning and end of Electra's iambic speech after the parodos, where she gives a more rational account of the necessity that defines her conduct, and in 619-21, in her confrontation with Clytemnestra, with verbal similarities as well: ἐν δεινοῖς δείν' (221), ἐν τοῖς κακοῖς...κακά (308-9), αἰσχροῖς...αἰσχρά (621).

[25]For similar statements see p. 121.

Orestes' glorious return to Mycenae as the lawful heir of his father.[26] In response, Electra points first to her miserable state as being unmarried and childless, always lamenting (164-67),[27] and then rejects the optimism of the chorus about Orestes' homecoming commenting on his long delay (167-72).[28]

The chorus understand that Electra is at the limits of her despair, hence their following attempt to encourage her (173 θάρσει μοι, θάρσει). They have a strong belief in the justice of Zeus - they have already mentioned that it is under his guidance that Orestes will arrive at Mycenae (162-63 Διὸς εὔφρονι βήματι) - so they advise her to rely on him (174ff). They view vengeance as the result of two interacting powers (180ff), a human (Orestes) and a divine (the god by Acheron),[29] with Zeus supervising all things from heaven. Similarly, in the third strophe the chorus see the killing of Agamemnon as the result of both a human and a supernatural agent (199-200).[30] As Scott (1996, 156) remarks, the chorus represent a more Aeschylean view than Electra, trusting in the gods to take an active part in the execution of Justice. They tried to teach her moderation by expressing their belief that time is a great healer (179), but Electra rejects it by stating the opposite: the passage of time has plunged her into greater despair (185ff). 186-88 repeat in other words the content of 164-67 of the corresponding stanza: ἄνευ τεκέων (187) echoes ἄτεκνος (164) while 188 is an elaboration of ἀνύμφευτος (165). This time Electra adds more information about her miserable life (189ff), describing her almost servile status, like a stranger (ἔποικος), in the palace of her father,[31] being ill-clothed,[32] ill-fed.

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[26]His characterization as ὄλβιος (160), surprising since he is an exile, is explained in the following relative clause while the long postponement of his name after the pronoun ὅν (160) comes triumphantly at the very end of the sentence.

[27]The insistence on the alphas in this section enhances the lamenting effect: ἀκάματα...ἄτεκνος, τάλαιν' ἀνύμφευτος...ἀνήνυτον. For δάκρυσι μυδαλέα (166) cf. *Pers.* 539 διαμυδαλέους δάκρυσι κόλπους and for ἀνήνυτον οἶτον (166-67) *Ant.* 859 τριπόλιστον οἶτον.

[28]For ἀεὶ μὲν γὰρ ποθεῖ, ποθῶν δ' οὐκ ἀξιοῖ φανῆναι (171-72) cf. 305-6, 319.

[29]Jebb (1894, on 183) has no doubt that the god mentioned is Hades, but Kells (1973, on 173ff) and Kamerbeek (1974, on 182-184) argue that the reference is to Agamemnon who rules in the underworld. A similar idea is expressed by the chorus in *Cho.* 355ff. Cf. also the similar phrasing used to describe Amphiaraus' status in the underworld in S. *El.* 839ff.

[30]Cf. 528, *Ag.* 1500ff.

[31]Cf. also δουλεύειν (814), δουλεύω (1192) as well as *Cho.* 135 κἀγὼ μὲν ἀντίδουλος.

[32]For her appearance see the comments of Orestes in 1177, 1181. Cf. also E. *El.* 107ff, 184ff.

Moved by the extent of Electra's misery, the chorus find themselves unable to offer any further consolation, so they join her lamentation by turning to the past and recalling Agamemnon's murder. The change in tone is marked by the shift to anapaests with heavy spondees (193-96) and the anaphora of οἰκτρά (193, 194). The exact interpretation of lines 193-94 is not certain, but, as Electra confirms in 203, they suggest that the murder was committed at a banquet.[33] Jebb (1894, on 193-196) believes that οἰκτρὰ μὲν νόστοις αὐδά (193) refers to Cassandra's cry at the return from Troy[34] or perhaps to the forebodings of the people at Mycenae, and the cry ἐν κοίταις πατρῴαις (194) to that of the dying Agamemnon or to Cassandra's death-cry (in this case κοίταις means 'couch'). Kamerbeek (1974, on 193-196) finds this interpretation probable but he prefers to see 193-94 as a sort of hendiadys which refers to Agamemnon's own death-cry when he was murdered on his return (in this case πατρῴαις means 'ancestral' and the whole phrase ἐν κοίταις πατρῴαις is meant to suggest the hall of the Pelopidae where the meal took place). Whatever interpretation we accept, κοίταις has ominous associations as referring to Agamemnon's death-couch (cf. E. *El.* 158 κοίτᾳ ἐν οἰκτροτάτᾳ θανάτου).[35] But perhaps the lack of precision in these two lines is intentional, as Burton (1980, 192-93) argues, suggesting the agitation of the chorus at trying to imagine what happened on that terrible night. The symmetrical phrasing of verse 197, with the mirroring effect produced by δόλος - ἔρος,[36] φράσας - κτείνας, emphasizes the matching powers that coordinated in order to lead to Agamemnon's murder.

The recollection by the chorus of Agamemnon's murder arouses Electra to a higher emotional pitch, as she first comments on that terrible event (201-6), then passes to the destructive effect it had on her life (207-8) and finally concludes her stanza with the wish that Zeus may punish the

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[33]Cf. also 284. Sophocles, in contrast to the Aeschylean account (followed by Euripides) that Agamemnon was killed in his bath (*Ag.* 1539-40, *Cho.* 998-99, E. *El.* 157), follows the Homeric version (*Od.* 11. 409ff) that he was murdered at a banquet celebrating his return.

[34]He believes that this phrase is modelled on the Homeric οἰκτροτάτην ὄπα of Cassandra as she dies (*Od.* 11. 421). Kells (1973, on 193ff), however, does not agree with Jebb about the Homeric influence on this passage since the circumstances of the murder were different in Homer: there Agamemnon was killed in Aegisthus' house where he was invited by him.

[35]In 272 κοίτῃ πατρός refers to Agamemnon's marriage-bed. For the frequent conflation of marriage and death in tragedy see pp. 215ff.

[36]An epic form used only here by Sophocles, as Jebb (1894, on 197) notes, which obviously gives a loftier tone to the phrase.

doers (209-12). Her emotional state is marked by the heavy spondaic anapaests in 201-4 (corresponding to those of the chorus in 193-96), the anaphoric repetition of ὦ in 201, 203 (corresponding to that of οἰκτρά in the choral utterance) and of αἴ (207-8),[37] the pleonastic expression πασᾶν... πλέον...ἐχθίστα (201-2) and the alliteration of π in 210, which draws attention to the theme of revenge.

After this stanza, where for the first and only time in the parodos the chorus mourn in unison with Electra, they resume their previous conflict with greater emphasis. They harshly rebuke her for her previous prayer for vengeance (213), finding it excessive and dangerous. Now for the first time they use the word ἄτη to describe her state of mind, accusing her of bringing herself to this state of misery and making her situation worse: 215ff οἰκείας εἰς ἄτας[38]...σᾷ...τίκτουσ' αἰεὶ ψυχᾷ πολέμους and in the epode 235 μὴ τίκτειν[39] σ' ἄταν ἄταις, a reproach which Electra does not argue (she uses the same word in 224). Her troubles cannot be comforted by any consolation (226-28),[40] so she asks the women of the chorus to leave her in peace (229 recalls 135). After her emphatic resolve not to cease lamenting, stated twice in this stanza (223-25, 231-32), the chorus give up any further arguments to exhort her towards their way of thinking.[41] In their short part in the epode they can only stress their good will in advising her. In response, Electra concludes her part in the kommos by stating once more her resolve to continue honouring her father with her lamentation (239-43),[42] and then passing to a more general moral statement, which justifies her lamentation and invocation of retribution, that the punishment of the murderers is required so that reverence and respect will not vanish from earth (244-50).

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[37]It refers to the murderous hands mentioned in 206. Note the use of πρόδοτον (208), which was also used in 126 after a similar phrase, κακᾷ τε χειρί.

[38]For this phrase cf. *Aj.* 260 οἰκεῖα πάθη.

[39]As Segal (1966, 490) argues, the repetition of this verb is ironic in view of Electra's childlessness.

[40]For the several interpretations suggested for the dative τίνι (228) and thus the different meanings of this phrase see Jebb (1894, on 226ff.).

[41]Burton (1980, 195) sees a tone of resignation in the combination of particles ἀλλ' οὖν...γε (233).

[42]As Kamerbeek (1974, on 241-243) remarks, the image given for the γόοι in 242-43 is that of winged creatures, which is reinforced by the use of ὀξυτόνων (cf. *Aj.* 630 ὀξυτόνους ᾠδάς). Rehm (1994, 174, n. 22) suggests that the reference here is to the nightingale.

The kommos has reached its end with Electra having imposed her personality upon the chorus.[43] Her perpetual mourning constitutes her *ethos*; she is identified with and defined through it. This is the only way she can show her devotion to her father and the only counterbalance she can oppose to the dire circumstances of her life. So, although she is aware of her excessive behaviour, she has decided to continue her countless threnodies as long as the circumstances remain the same. Nothing can comfort her, thus she rejects all such attempts of the chorus. Their admonitions simply serve as a foil to her character, preparing for her confrontations with Chrysothemis and Clytemnestra. Here, as in *Aj.* 348ff the kommos of shared grief, uniting individual and group, is replaced by an encounter which demonstrates the impermeable isolation of its *exarchos*. Placed near the beginning of the play, it prefigures a course of action yet to be taken, rather than providing emotional closure.

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[43]Similarly, in the shorter kommos in 823ff Electra finally prevails over the chorus, as she silences their attempts at consolation.

3. *ANTIGONE*

806-882

Scholars generally acknowledge the 'marriage to death' motif in *Ant.* and Antigone as the *par excellence* 'bride of Hades' in Greek tragedy. This motif is to be explored in the light of the frequent conflation of the wedding and funeral rites in tragedy, which reflects the close connection between these two rituals in real life.[1]

Some common elements between them may be summarized as follows. Both the bride and the groom as well as the dead are ritually bathed, dressed and adorned; the bride is veiled, the corpse is covered; both the bride and the dead are escorted to their new 'home' in a procession which often involves a horse-cart, with the accompaniment of family and friends and with music and dance; both ceremonies end in a banquet. As Rehm (1994, 22) notes, the connection between the two rites is reflected in the term κῆδος, which is used to refer both to a 'relation by marriage' and to the 'funeral ritual'. In the wedding as well as in the funeral ceremony women had a prominent role. In fact, these were the public events in which they had the most important part. The association between the two rituals in real life finds its equivalent in funerary iconography,[2] e.g. a woman who died before marriage is often presented on her death-couch in her wedding attire; Hermes as ψυχοπομπός often takes the dead woman by the wrist to lead her to Charon or to her grave, a gesture normally performed by the groom, as we see from wedding illustrations.

For a young girl the transition from her maiden life to that of a married woman meant isolation, separation from her friends and family, and could thus be compared to death. It is characteristic that a sense of loss pervades wedding hymns as well as funeral dirges alike since both occasions mark an irreversible transition.[3] As Seaford (1987, 106) puts it, in the cases of death before marriage "a transition effected by nature (death) is enclosed by the imagination within a similar transition effected by culture (marriage)". Often in the epitaphs the death of an unmarried girl is imagined as her

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[1]Two recent studies which deal extensively with the above themes are Seaford (1987) and Rehm (1994).

[2]Rehm (1994, 30-42) gives an extensive treatment of this subject.

[3]See Smyth (1900, cxv) and for parallels in modern Greece Coulton (1983, esp. 130ff).

wedding with Hades.[4] Rose (1925, 242) argues in his anthropological treatment of the subject that "the tale of Kore being carried off by Hades is a kind of 'projection' from the many human κόραι who had had the same experience." Similarly, a young man who died before marriage is sometimes talked of as the groom of Persephone.[5]

It is evident from the above that the 'marriage to death' motif was not a mere dramatic device but something familiar to the spectators from their everyday experience, which offered the tragedians the opportunity for further development and exploitation. So, for example, Hecuba adorns the dead Astyanax with robes that would be appropriate for his wedding (*Tro.* 1218-20). The πέπλοι and στέφανος Medea sends to Jason's future wife turn out to be Ἄιδα κόσμος (*Med.* 980-81), so that she will be a bride in the underworld (985 νερτέροις δ' ἤδη πάρα νυμφοκομήσει). Evadne, dressed as a bride,[6] sings a monody where she recalls her marriage with Capaneus and envisages her intended suicide as an erotic union with him in Hades (E. *Supp.* 990-1030).[7]

Turning now to the specific case of Antigone, Creon punishes her with a marriage in Hades (654), i.e. burial while still alive in a rocky cave (773-74), since this punishment is suitable, as he explains (777-78), for the crime of one who has been so much devoted to Hades. Later on, the description of Haemon's suicide in the νυμφεῖον Ἄιδου (1205) has obvious erotic overtones (1234ff). He is united with Antigone in death (1240-41), and so Creon's threat that he would never marry her while she lives (750) becomes true. However, although the image of Antigone as bride of Hades pervades a large part of the play, it is especially prominent in the kommos between her and the chorus (806ff).

It is likely that in this scene she appears wearing a wedding dress, as she is going to her groom.[8] However, her ἐξαγωγή as a bride to her new

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[4]For some references see Rose (1925, n. 2), Seaford (1987, 106, 107, esp. nn. 11, 16, 17).

[5]See Rose (1925, n. 3). The death of a son while about to get married is the most painful loss and one that deserves the greatest mourning (see *Il.* 23. 222ff).

[6]For Evadne's attire see Collard (1975, I. 22; II. on 990-1033, 1054).

[7]For similar references in tragedy cf. also *Tro.* 445, *Or.* 1109, *I.A.* 461.

[8]According to Benett - Tyrrell (1991-92, 107) another costume would contradict the audience's expectations. They also argue (109), following Jebb (1900, on 1222), that the σινδών mentioned in 1222 should be identified with her veil, which, in a perversion of the ceremony of ἀνακαλυπτήρια which denoted the bride's consent to her forthcoming marriage, Antigone removes in order to hang herself, thus denoting her consent to her unusual marriage. Rehm

'home' is identified with her ἐκφορά as a corpse to her grave, the only case in tragedy where a character participates in his own funeral procession, a theme repeatedly emphasized (810-11, 821-22, 888, 920). So in Antigone's representation in this scene the two rites are conflated, although perverted, since there are no wedding hymns for her (813-16, 876-77, 917 ἀνυμέναιος) nor funeral dirges (847, 876 ἄκλαυτος, 881-82). Both types of song would be normally sung by women, the former by her female friends,[9] the latter by her female relatives. Instead, Antigone's partner in this lyric exchange is a chorus of elders.

In fact, as Seaford (1987, 108) suggests, the hymn to Eros the chorus sing before her entrance (third stasimon) is appropriate to a hymeneal context, in particular the reference to its power in nature, which was a τόπος of the later wedding ceremony. However, ironic is the fact that while the chorus emphasize the power of love Antigone is walking towards her death (eros and thanatos, while poignantly contrasted, also appear as one and the same). Seaford also remarks (1990, 78) that this imaginary wedding procession constitutes an inversion of a normal one in the sense that Antigone will join her natal family (867, 892-93, 897-99), whereas in real life the girl would permanently leave it. It is worth noticing that the metre of the third stasimon (choriambic) continues into the kommos, which shows that the two lyric pieces should be seen as a musical unity. This metrical affinity reinforces the paradox that Antigone's only wedding hymn is a dirge,[10] which would be more poignant if, according to an attractive supposition, the music of this kommos also recalled marriage hymns.[11]

The way Antigone laments by identifying her marriage chamber with her tomb (891 ὦ τύμβος ὦ νυμφεῖον)[12] and her groom with Hades (810-11, 816) would suit the sort of lamentation for a girl who died before marriage.

(1994, 64) remarks in addition that in this case the veil that reveals the bride is identified with the shroud that covers the dead, since σινδών can be used in this meaning as well.

[9]Although boys could also participate in the singing of an epithalamium (see Smyth 1900, cxv).

[10]Choriambs were, among other rhythms, used in hymeneal songs (see Smyth 1900, cxviii). So in Ar.*Birds* 1731ff telesilleans and pherecrateans are used, in *Peace* 1329ff telesilleans as well as reiziana. In *Tro.* 308ff Cassandra's ecstasy is conveyed through dochmiacs and iambics, but glyconics are also employed as appropriate to the wedding hymn. Glyconics are also frequent in the third stasimon of *Ant.* and the first strophic pair of the kommos.

[11]See Goheen (1951, 38, 137, n. 5).

[12]Cf. also 1205, 1207 and the ambiguity of θάλαμον in 804, which can be used to denote both.

However, in this case she has to sing her own dirge in advance since nobody will do so after her death. Scholars generally are puzzled by Antigone's lamentation in this scene, as being inconsistent with her previous defiance of death, and try to justify it in some way.[13] However, the evident reason is that Antigone has to lament since it is her own funeral and nobody else will do it, so I think that whoever sees her representation in this scene as contradictory to the heroic temper she exhibited in her previous appearances simply misses the point of the conventionality of lamentation for the dead in Greek culture.

The question concerning the attitude of the chorus towards the two main characters of *Ant.* and the extent to which they support Creon or Antigone is controversial.[14] Especially as regards their attitude towards Antigone, a detailed analysis of the kommos may be able to clarify this matter, although in some cases the interpretation of the chorus' words is uncertain (e.g. in 817-18, 854-55) and much depends on the tone of their voice. Their identity decisively defines their attitude towards Antigone: they are males and would, thus, normally disapprove of female boldness, aged (159, 281) and members of the aristocracy (843, 940, 988), so they would naturally show devotion to Thebes and support its ruler. This kind of chorus is appropriate so that, by being distanced from Antigone by age, sex[15] and status, her isolation will be even more emphatic in the exchange between them.

In the first strophic pair of the kommos Antigone's choriambic stanzas are answered by two anapaestic utterances by the chorus (or the coryphaeus alone),[16] while in the second pair her stanzas (now iambo-choriambic with some dochmiacs) are answered by lyric iambics. The metre of Antigone's lyrics becomes more complicated as the kommos progresses, even more so in the epode (a mixture of iambic, choriambic, dactylic and

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[13]For example, Winnington-Ingram (1980, 139) argues that it is the manner of her death that moves her so much.

[14]For some different opinions about the sympathies of the chorus in this play see Gardiner (1987, 83 and nn. 3, 4).

[15]It is worth noticing that *Ant.* is the only one among Sophocles' extant plays where the chorus are of a different sex from the main character, if we consider Antigone as such.

[16]It is more likely that these anapaests are recitative: see Burton (1980, 118), Jebb (1900, 248, on 110ff), although Gardiner (1987, 92, n. 16) finds it difficult to decide between recitative or lyric.

trochaic rhythms),[17] while half way through, as the emotion rises higher, she leads the chorus to song as well. The contrast between her lyrics and their anapaests conveys their different emotional situations while, as Gardiner (1987, 92) notices, even when they are engaged in song their heavily iambic tone would have sounded completely distinct from Antigone's lyrics, expressing solemnity and calmness in contrast to her distress. In any case the change of metre in the choral utterances may indicate a difference in tone: in the first two they try to comfort Antigone while in the others they disapprove of her boldness more clearly.

In the anapaestic prelude to the kommos (801-5) announcing Antigone's entrance the coryphaeus expresses their emotional involvement with her suffering. As Haemon succumbed to the irrational power of Eros (as remarked in the previous stasimon), so now they cannot control their emotions,[18] that is, they cannot help weeping for Antigone (802-3), even though this is not right since it shows lack of respect towards Creon. Antigone starts her lament conventionally by pointing to her suffering (806 ὁρᾶτ' ἔμ' echoes the coryphaeus' ὁρῶ from 804) and mourning for her last journey and the last time she looks upon the light of the sun (807-9).[19] The anaphoric repetition of νεάταν (807), νέατον (808) adds pathos to her utterance as well as the lack of the future participle after κοὔποτ' αὖθις (810),[20] which, according to Kamerbeek (1978, on 807-10), "is suggestive of a breaking off". In the rest of the strophe she elaborates on the 'marriage to death' motif, attributing to Hades the adjective (810-11 παγκοίτας) the coryphaeus had used to refer to her tomb (804).

As a reply to Antigone's lament, the chorus try to console her by stressing the glory she will receive because of the unique manner of her death. McDevitt (1982, 136) argues that the connective οὐκοῦν (817) is important, since it simply takes her thought somewhat further, thus indicating that there is a close connection between her words and the chorus' reply. By contrast, Knox (1964, 176-77, n. 8) argues that nobody is praising her at the moment, and thus changes οὐκοῦν to οὔκουν, which has a negative meaning, i.e. "not with glory or with praise", as she would have had if she

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[17]For a detailed discussion of the metrical pattern of the kommos see Pohlsander (1964, 33ff), Dale (1981, 26ff).

[18]The parallelism between the two cases is conveyed in the phrasing of lines 801-2 νῦν δ' ἤδη 'γὼ καὐτὸς θεσμῶν ἔξω φέρομαι, with θεσμῶν picked up from 798.

[19]For a similar idea cf. *Aj.* 856-58, *O.T.* 1183, *O.C.* 1549-50, *Alc.* 207-8.

[20]For this phrase cf. also *Aj.* 858, *Alc.* 207.

had had a normal death and thus proper funeral.[21] However, I think that we can hardly interpret the attitude of the chorus as being as hostile towards Antigone at this point as Knox does. Essential to our understanding of the motives of Antigone's deed as well as of the chorus' attitude towards her is the interpretation of αὐτόνομος (821). The meaning is usually taken to be that she will die 'by her own free will', which suggests a contrast with the natural causes of death mentioned in 819-20, and 'following her own law', which implies disobedience to other laws she does not accept. There may be a tone of admiration or of reproach (or both) in the use of this adjective. Burton (1980, 119) suggests that the chorus may be thinking especially of her speech before Creon (450ff), where she rejected the laws of the state in favour of the unwritten laws of the gods.

The last choral remark (821-22), that her doom to go to Hades alive is unique among mortals, reminds Antigone of the similar manner of Niobe's death whose turning into a stone may be likened to her rocky tomb (cf. S. *El.* 151 ἐν τάφῳ πετραίῳ). The petrifaction of Niobe is described as a process that took place gradually (cf. 827 "the growth of stone subdued her"), while the description of the rain and snow that flow down the rock (828ff) is fused with that of the tears of the human figure. ὀφρύς and δειράς (831, 832) can be used either of mountains or of a human body (see Jebb 1900, on 831) while τακομέναν (828) points especially to the human figure,[22] so that the forms of rock and woman are presented as closely intertwined: it is as if Niobe still lives within the rock. In a way she has suffered a 'living death', as Antigone will suffer, while the transitional moments she experienced as she was changing into a stone are similar to Antigone's feelings as she is walking towards her tomb. Niobe's solitude on mount Sipylus (cf. *Il.* 24. 614) can be also compared to the loneliness Antigone feels at this moment. The mythological parallel is extensive (it occupies the whole stanza), with elaborate language and vivid imagery, concluding with a comparison with Antigone's fate, ᾇ με δαίμων ὁμοιοτάταν[23] κατευνάζει (832-33). In tracing a

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[21]However, as McDevitt (1982, 143, n. 8) argues, in this case "the 'living death' to which the Chorus refers in 821ff ceases to be climactic and becomes rather merely an unfortunate circumstance which has prevented Antigone from having a proper burial and the eulogy which goes with it."

[22]This verb is frequently used for tragic heroines who pine away with lamentation (see p. 81).

[23]This superlative mirrors in a way the one with which the mythological parallel started, λυγροτάταν (823), describing Niobe's death. As Davies (1985, 248-49) notes, superlatives are idiomatic in mythological *exempla* (cf. also *Herc.* 1016-17 ὁ φόνος ἦν...περισαμότατος).

close similarity between Niobe's doom and her own, Antigone has tried to refute the statement of the chorus about the uniqueness of her fate and so to find consolation in the thought that another human being suffered the same fate as hers.

The chorus, however, find this parallel inappropriate, stressing an important difference between the two female figures: Niobe is of divine origin (see p. 207, n. 11) whereas Antigone is a mortal (834-35). There may also be a tone of reproof in their words in the sense that Antigone dared compare herself with a divine being.[24] However, in their next statement (836-38) the chorus try to comfort Antigone[25] in the thought that it will be a great glory for her to have suffered the fate of a goddess. They draw their consolation from their previous reproving statement and admit, after all, that her fate is not unique, as they had originally stated (821-22).

However, Antigone's reaction, οἴμοι γελῶμαι.[26] τί με...ὑβρίζεις...; (839-40), shows that she has been insulted instead of comforted by the words of the chorus. The reason for it is much disputed. So Jebb (1900, on 834-838) and Linforth (1961, 223) argue that Antigone looks for present pity, which she does not receive, since the chorus allude to her posthumous fame.[27] McDevitt (1982, 138-39) argues that what Antigone takes as a mockery is that, although she has compared herself with Niobe in the manner of her death, the chorus draw a comparison between their lives as well, which is inappropriate since Niobe was renowned for her many children while Antigone is dying unmarried and childless. However, I find it unlikely that ζῶσαν (838) refers to the lives of Niobe and Antigone in general (it is indeed difficult to find any common points of comparison), and prefer to take it as referring to the moments they experience as fully living beings before they are found in the strange situation of a 'living death'. What Antigone takes as mockery is, I

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[24]The reproving tone is conveyed through τοι (834), whose "primary function is to bring home to the comprehension of the person addressed a truth of which he is ignorant, or temporarily oblivious" (Denniston 1950, 537), and the emphasis on the clear distinction between θεός - θεογεννής (834) and βροτοί - θνητογενεῖς (835). See also McDevitt (1982, 138). However, other scholars exclude an element of reproof in the chorus' words, e.g. Jebb (1900, on 834-838), Oehler (1925, 82, 95), Brown (1987, on 834-5).

[25]As McDevitt (1982, 138) remarks, καίτοι (836) is wholly consolatory.

[26]For the idea of being laughed at by one's enemies see p. 199, n. 3.

[27]Similarly Burton (1980, 119), who remarks in addition that Antigone is looking not only for sympathy for her present suffering but also for an acknowledgement from the chorus that she has done the right thing.

think, the fact that in referring to her the chorus clearly separate the notions of life and death (cf. 838), whereas, by evoking the image of the ever-lamenting Niobe in her new form as a rock, she had claimed some kind of immortality for herself, namely, that she would continue living in some way in her tomb.[28]

In kommoi it is normally the chorus who raise a mythological or other parallel in order to console the mourner (cf. S. *El*. 837ff, *Alc*. 903ff). However, in this case this relationship has been reversed. In view of the chorus' inability to provide such an example, Antigone has to undertake their role and comfort herself. The fact that they find it inappropriate shows that they have a different view-point and, therefore, that they are not the best responders to her lament, which results in the intensification of her feeling of isolation. So Antigone now turns to her natural surroundings, the spring of Dirce and the land of Thebes (844-45), calling them as witnesses to Creon's impious laws which send her to her tomb (847-49 οἵοις[29] νόμοις...). What is especially poignant is her feeling that she is suspended between life and death without belonging anywhere, a notion emphatically expressed with the use of μέτοικος (852, 868). As Knox (1964, 114) puts it, "she has no citizenship or legal residence in the world above, but neither will she have it in the world below." Else (1976, 59) suggests in addition that the reference to Acheron's bride (816) implies that she will not cross Acheron but will thus remain suspended between this world and the world of the dead. Thus Antigone conceives her situation as a 'living death', i.e. similar to the case of Niobe, which contradicts the clear-cut distinction the chorus drew between life and death (so 852 answers 838). Her procession is deliberately slow (932, 939) so that she experiences this status as ever-lasting (like Niobe's).

The interpretation of lines 853-56 is controversial, mainly depending on the verb accepted in 855, i.e. προσέπαισας or προσέπεσες, and its meaning.[30] Most scholars agree that in this passage the chorus condemn Antigone's boldness, reminding her that she has overstepped some limits for

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[28]Knox (1964, 66) refers to this implication of Antigone's use of the mythological parallel - McDevitt (1982, 143, n. 19) also considers it as a possibility - but I think that most scholars miss the point.

[29]οἶος is frequently used in the Sophoclean and Euripidean kommoi to express agitation, e.g. *Aj*. 351, 367, 909, *Ant*. 866, *Hipp*. 845, 874, *Tro*. 1290.

[30]Brown (1987, on 854-5) finds that the Greek is odd anyway and suspects that the passage may be more corrupt than is generally thought.

which she is now punished.[31] The harshness of their remark is, however, palliated by ὦ τέκνον (855). Other scholars take προσπίπτω in the sense 'to throw oneself down in supplication'.[32] However, this interpretation is incongruous with Antigone's attitude in the play and the chorus' understanding of it. It is unlikely that they see her as a suppliant since they have already condemned her boldness in the second stasimon, 604ff, where they imply that she has committed *hybris* and therefore will be punished.[33]

However, in 856 the chorus modify their remark about Antigone's personal responsibility in her hybristic behaviour by saying that her present ordeal is the penalty she is paying for her father's misdeeds. The notion that she is the victim of an hereditary curse is also found in the second stasimon, 593ff.[34] On such an accursed person the gods impose folly and delusion of mind (603 λόγου τ' ἄνοια[35] καὶ φρενῶν 'Ερινύς), so that she confuses evil with good and is subsequently led to disaster (622-25). It is clear from the second stasimon that the chorus consider Polyneices' burial as an offence, even though Antigone is not wholly responsible herself, and it is in this light that we should see the choral statement in 853-56: personal initiative and family curse in combination work upon Antigone. Ignoring the reproach of the chorus Antigone elaborates on their final statement (856), being reminded of the fate of her family[36] and the incestuous marriage of her parents, which in turn reminds her of another marriage, no less disastrous, that of Polyneices

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[31]So, for example, Jebb (1900, on 853ff) accepts προσέπεσες and interprets this passage as follows: "We are to imagine the daring offender as going forward to a boundary where Justice sits enthroned, forbidding all further advance. Instead of pausing there, the rebel still rushes on, to cross the boundary - and, in doing so, dashes herself against the throne of the goddess."

[32]Cf. Goheen (1951, 73-74, 148-49, nn. 47, 48), Lesky (1952, 92-94). Pozzi (1989, 502-5) takes this interpretation even further, suggesting that here we have a metaphor of sacrifice, in the sense that Antigone fell on her knees as a sacrificial victim before the altar of Dike for the sake of her family.

[33]Burton (1980, 121-22) also rejects the image of Antigone's supplication.

[34]Cf. also 471 τὸ γέννημ' ὠμὸν ἐξ ὠμοῦ πατρός, which, although a criticism, may also be seen as an attempt to excuse her behaviour, as in 856.

[35]In 383 they blamed her action on her ἀφροσύνη.

[36]Jebb (1900, on 857ff) and Kamerbeek (1978, on 857-61) prefer to read οἶκτον in 859 (instead of οἶτον), in which case the reference is to Antigone's often renewed (τριπόλιστον) lament. Kamerbeek (on 863-65) suggests in addition that 863ff ἰώ... is an example of these laments, which reinforces the above argument.

with Adrastus' daughter, which caused her death (869-71). In between these two unholy unions Antigone reflects on her own accursed, unmarried self (867).

Her reference to her brother at the end of the second antistrophe prompts the chorus to comment on her act of burying him, which they recognize as pious (872). This remark is meant to comfort her, but its effect is modified by τις and is certainly undermined by the next two lines (873-74), where they condemn her resistance towards authority. The Elders continue by attributing her destruction exclusively to her own disposition, αὐτόγνωτος[37] ὀργά (875), a phrase which is important for their understanding of Antigone's action, especially since it is their last statement in the kommos. Feeling that she is completely rejected by them, Antigone resumes in the epode the main reasons for her lamentation, emphasized at its beginning with the asyndetic juxtaposition of three compound epithets beginning with α *privative* (876-77 ἄκλαυτος, ἄφιλος, ἀνυμέναιος). The phraseology of the epode recalls the first stanza of the kommos: τὰν ἑτοίμαν ὁδόν (878) echoes τὰν νεάταν ὁδόν (807) while 879-80 repeat in other words 808-10. So Antigone's lamentation is recapitulated in the form of ring composition.

ἑτοίμαν (878) and οὐκέτι (879) imply that her lament is at its end and prepare Creon's entry,[38] who orders immediate movement rebuking the guards for allowing such a long delay. After the lyric expression of her emotions Antigone changes to spoken iambics, resuming in a calmer tone the themes of her previous lamentation, clarifying the motives of her action and reflecting on the consequences.[39] She does not address the chorus anymore,

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[37]Rehm (1994, 65-66) remarks that Sophocles uses several αὐτο- compounds in this play to emphasize self-destruction. So in this kommos we also find αὐτόνομος (821), αὐτογέννητ' (864-65), Haemon and Eurydice kill themselves with their own hand (1175, 1315 αὐτόχειρ), Oedipus blinds himself αὐτουργῷ χερί (52).

[38]Whether Creon is present during the kommos or not is a controversial matter. For example, Kitto (1956, 167-70), Knox (1964, 179, n. 21) and Griffith (1999, 261, 274 on 883-90) argue that he is present throughout, Burton (1980, 112) and Linforth (1961, 224-25) that he comes interrupting Antigone's song, Coleman (1972, 18, n. 1), similarly, that he comes at the end of, or some way through, the kommos. Likewise, I think that Creon's presence during this scene would not serve any dramatic purpose nor would it be fitting for his character to tolerate such a long lamentation before interrupting it.

[39]The question whether Creon is present throughout this speech is also disputed. I think that his absence would be more fitting for the same reasons as during the kommos (see n. above). He gives his orders, then he withdraws and later on (931) he comes again out to see whether

but only her tomb (891-92) and the dead of her family, with emphasis on Polyneices (898ff),[40] which shows her complete isolation. She feels that even the gods have abandoned her (922-23), but still insists on the piety of her deed (924 τὴν δυσσέβειαν εὐσεβοῦσ' ἐκτησάμην). In fact, her last words in the anapaestic section concluding her part in the play constitute a contrast between the injustice she suffers and her reverence for piety (942-43). In this anapaestic utterance she bids a last farewell to her native land and her ancestral gods, and invites the chorus for the last time to look upon her suffering. Thus she concludes her lamentation as she started it, namely, by drawing attention to herself: λεύσσετε (940) echoes ὁρᾶτε (806). The urge for immediate exit is also emphasized in similar phrasing (939 ἄγομαι δὴ 'γὼ κοὐκέτι μέλλω) as in the epode (877 ἄγομαι, 879 οὐκέτι μοι).

Antigone experiences an increasing feeling of loneliness throughout the play: she is isolated from Ismene already at the end of the prologue; she has not heard Haemon saying that the people of Thebes think she deserves honour for her deed (692ff); she expressed her confidence that the Theban elders approve of her act (504ff), but their attitude towards her in the kommos does not justify her belief. They shed tears on seeing Antigone (802ff), but they quickly suppress them when the kommos begins so that she feels she is unmourned (847, 876 ἄκλαυτος). They try to comfort her by praising the manner of her death (although not her action), but when she rebuffs their consolation they turn to condemnation of her boldness and independent temperament. As Brown (1987, on 839-52) remarks, here as well as in the kommoi of S. *El*. (although there the chorus is more sympathetic towards the heroine), "the element of conflict brings to the lamentation a sharpness and dramatic vigour which would be lacking in an ordinary antiphonal dirge."

Although the chorus have expressed their thoughts about her action earlier in the play, this is the first time they are engaged in an open confrontation with her, all the more poignant since, while walking towards her tomb, Antigone would expect to hear words of sympathy and not the cold comfort of the chorus. Thus in her last appearance in the play her isolation is complete (887 μόνην ἐρῆμον, 919 ὧδ' ἐρῆμος πρὸς φίλων). Coleman (1972, 18) argues that this feeling is revealing of her own character rather than the result

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they have been executed. Antigone's long delay despite Creon's commands is a characteristic example of the technique of freezing the action while the current situation is explored, which is frequent in Greek drama: see Brown (1987, on 806-82, 883-943), Macintosh (1996, 415-17).

[40]I will not get involved in the discussion of the authenticity of lines 904-20 and the problems they present. Two recent studies on this subject are Murnaghan (1986) and Neuburg (1990).

of the behaviour of those around her. However, even if this is the case, it does not change the way Antigone sees her fate, and Sophocles takes care to present her going to her tomb completely isolated. Antigone is a typical example of a Sophoclean hero who, rejecting compromise, is unable to communicate effectively with those around her and remains alone till the end. The kommos, coinciding with her last appearance and subverted by its lack of the supportive structure of antiphony, is the best means to convey these qualities of hers.

1261-1347

If the kommos in *Ant.* 806ff "stands at the emotional centre of the play",[41] the fourth stasimon which follows creates a pause at the point where Antigone's story ends and Creon's downfall is about to begin, thus it is the turning point of the play. I do not intend to become involved in the much-discussed problem of the relation of the three myths described in the fourth stasimon to Antigone's case,[42] but rather to see briefly how it foreshadows the future in the implications it draws about Creon's fate.[43]

This is better shown in its second stanza, the myth about Lycurgus. He offended Dionysus by preventing the women who were possessed by the god from his worship (963-65). Similarly, Creon offended the gods by exposing Polyneices' body and not tolerating Antigone's burial of her brother. In a way Antigone's behaviour caused confusion (cf. 525 οὐκ ἄρξει γυνή) similar to that of the maenads Lycurgus tried to stop. Traditional in Lycurgus' story was that while mad he killed his son, a theme which, although not treated in the fourth stasimon, could easily have been evoked since it was well-known. Similarly, Creon will be proved to 'have killed' Haemon with his actions. In the end Lycurgus learned that he was wrong (960 ἐπέγνω). Similarly Creon, although throughout the play he repeatedly presents himself as right, after the Teiresias-scene he is κακόφρων in the eyes of the chorus (1104), the messenger attributes to him ἀβουλία (1242) while he himself blames

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[41]Brown (1987, 189-90).

[42]Two recent studies on this stasimon are Sourvinou-Inwood (1989), with extensive bibliography on p. 141, n. 1, and McDevitt (1990).

[43]Scholars have long recognized the association between the two cases. Sourvinou-Inwood (1989, 149ff) gives an extensive discussion of it, on which I draw in my analysis here.

his faults on the delusion of his mind (cf. 1261 φρενῶν δυσφρόνων ἁμαρτήματα, 1265 ἐμῶν ἄνολβα βουλευμάτων, 1269 ἐμαῖς δυσβουλίαις), considering himself exclusively responsible for the deaths of Haemon and Eurydice (1317-20, 1340-41).[44] So finally he will learn from his mistakes and not Antigone, as he had claimed for her (779-80). The motif of late learning through past mistakes is especially significant in the play, emphasized in the last choral utterance as well (1348ff). In fact, the very last word of the play is ἐδίδαξαν (1353), while the insistence on the notion of φρονεῖν (1348, 1353), as Burton (1980, 136) remarks, emphasizes that *Ant.* is for Creon a tragedy of ἄνοια.[45]

In his kommos Creon appears completely shattered. With the loss of Haemon and Eurydice he finds himself in an οἶκος of death, alone among the dead (1297-1300). He is also responsible for the death of his son Megareus, mentioned only in 1303,[46] so, having destroyed his entire family, he is now less than nothing (1325), completely helpless (1341-43), wishing only to die (1306ff, 1328ff). However, he has lost not only his family but also the respect of his fellow citizens, the chorus, who face him in a rather cold and austere way without showing any sympathy for him. He has failed in both the private and the public sphere.

It is noticeable that in this kommos Creon sings his first lyrics in the play, his extreme emotions being marked by his chiefly dochmiac utterances (apart from two iambic trimeters in 1271=1295, 1273=1297), his passionate cries, the repetition of words and phrases, the frequent questions and interrupted phrases and the asyndetic structure throughout it, all this doubtless accompanied by expressive gestures. Creon tried to put an end to Antigone's lament, but now he mourns more passionately than she had. She was going alive to the dead but he is dead among the living (cf. 1167 ἔμψυχον νεκρόν). Like her, he is the sole mourner of his ruined house. So in the end he

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[44]In as much as this kommos elaborates on the grief as well as the guilt of the singer, it can be likened to the exodos of *Pers.* where Xerxes mourns, being himself responsible for the catastrophe.

[45]However, Gardiner (1987, 97) points out that these final lines could be applied equally well to the chorus themselves.

[46]He was sacrificed so that Thebes would not fall to the Argives. This event is dramatized in E. *Pho.* 911ff, where Creon tries in vain to save his son, in this case called Menoeceus, who, nevertheless, is determined to die. However, in Sophocles' version Creon is more directly responsible for this death, as is evident from 1302-5, 1312-13.

gets what Antigone had wished him to get (927-28). As Segal (1995, 131) remarks, "these symmetries suggest a moral order of retributive justice".

Creon enters probably carrying Haemon's body in his arms (1258 διὰ χειρὸς ἔχων),[47] what the coryphaeus calls μνῆμ' ἐπίσημον (1258), "a memorial of the father's unwisdom",[48] thus blaming him for the death of his son, although with some reserve (1259 εἰ θέμις εἰπεῖν). This scene would, therefore, resemble a funeral procession, paralleling that of Antigone. Creon's mourning is compounded after the news of Eurydice's death. So the messenger report is subordinated to the kommos, which thus obtains a dynamic character: there is action during it (the entrance of the messenger, then of the *ekkyklema* disclosing Eurydice's corpse) and news is reported (Eurydice's death), so that the catastrophe becomes greater as it progresses. The interweaving of the two scenes into one is artistically managed, but it contradicts the reality of a traditional kommos since there the catastrophe belongs exclusively to the past, and the lamentation in the present is a reaction to that. As Segal (1995, 121) puts it, the movement towards a ritualizing closure is sharply interrupted by the shock of a new disorder, Eurydice's suicide.

Eurydice's speaking part in the play is very short (1183-91). In fact, she appears only to listen to the messenger's report about Haemon's death and then leaves silently in order to kill herself. It is the news of her death and the bringing on stage of her corpse that weigh more heavily since their only purpose is to enhance Creon's catastrophe and his feeling of responsibility for the destruction of his οἶκος. As Rehm (1994, 67) observes, Eurydice's representation in this play is exactly the opposite of Antigone. She bears her suffering in private, in contrast to Antigone's public lamentation, but in the vengeance she reserves for Creon with her suicide, the appearance of her corpse interrupts his dirge for Haemon, "a shocking intrusion into her husband's world... The tyrant's efforts to subordinate women...fail in the end. In different ways both Antigone and Eurydike disrupt the public world of Kreon."

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[47]See Kamerbeek (1978, on 1258), Ewans (1999, 239 and n. 118). The repeated references that Creon is holding Haemon's body (cf. also 1279, 1297 and possibly 1345) indicate that they should indeed be taken literally, which would heighten the dramatic effect of the scene.

[48]So Jebb (1900, on 1258). μνῆμα is used for a tomb or a monument for the dead while the adjective ἐπίσημος can mean literally 'bearing an inscription'. For a similar phrase cf. S. *El.* 1126-27, where Electra addresses Orestes' supposedly funerary urn as μνημεῖον..Ὀρέστου.

Both Antigone and Creon claim the title of the tragic hero in the play.[49] As Knox (1964, 67-68) notices, Creon seems at first sight to be "the one who, like the Aristotelian tragic hero, is a man of eminence, high in power and prosperity, who comes crashing down from the pinnacle of greatness... But he lacks the heroic temper." So whereas Antigone remains till the end firm in her beliefs, Creon surrenders. She goes to her death without having regretted her deed while Creon is repentant of his previous stubbornness. In fact, he seems to be even more isolated than Antigone, since the chorus do not address any words of sympathy to him, as at least they tried to do with her, not share in his lyric verses, as they did in hers. So he is now in the position he described in 473ff as a threat against Antigone: from a boastful king he has become a shattered man without any support. In fact, he is in a worse position than she since he has to live and face the consequences of his folly. The different attitudes of Antigone and Creon could not be shown more expressively than through the two kommoi, each of which 'closes', as it were, one half of the play, marking the last appearance of each of the two central figures of the play.

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[49]For a bibliography on this debate see Scott (1996, 262, n. 20).

III. EURIPIDES

1. *SUPPLICES*

798-837

Scholars have long puzzled over the structural difficulties of E. *Supp.*, failing to find unity in its various scenes, and have tried to interpret them in several ways.[1] It is also generally noticed that the play falls into two distinct parts:[2] in the first, the prominent feature is the supplication of the mothers, who seek and finally achieve the recovery of the bodies of their sons, while in the second part a mood of unrestrained grief prevails, as the arrival first of the bodies and later of the funerary urns of the Seven gives the opportunity for ritual mourning. So the second half of the play is characterized by a slower, sometimes static, course in comparison to the quick, agonistic movement of the first part. As Collard (1972, 45ff) notices, this is mirrored in the structure and alternation of the episodes and lyric pieces.

The first two episodes are long while the parodos and the first two stasima very short. By contrast, in the second part the episodes become successively shorter while the lyrics increase in length and variety: the third stasimon followed by the first kommos (778-837) and the fourth stasimon followed by Evadne's monody (955-1030) constitute two extensive lyric systems, which together with a short choral ode (918-24) and two other kommoi (1072-79, 1123-64) complement the atmosphere of unrelieved lamentation. The alternation of various lyric forms serves so that a tiring repetition of the same device is avoided. As Collard (1972, 46) remarks, "Euripides uses purely formal devices to give an impression of connected development for a series of dramatically disparate scenes." The urgent need for the recovery of the dead in the first part of the play leaves no place for lamentation there, "except as an emotive stimulant of Athenian pity, either Aethra's (parodos 42-86) or Theseus' (astrophic dactyls 271-85),"[3] whereas the relaxed mood that prevails after the restoration of the bodies accounts for the accumulation of lamenting pieces in the second part of the play.

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[1]Smith (1966, 151-52), Collard (1975, I. 24-25) discuss some of the interpretations suggested. For a defence of the unity of the play see Collard (1975, I. 25ff).

[2]See, for example, Collard (1972, 45ff), Smith (1966, 152ff).

[3]Collard (1972, 47).

The sequence of events concerning the ritual mourning and the other funeral rites for the Seven follows, as Collard (1975, I. 26) remarks, as far as theatrical practice allows, a real-life funeral: the laying out of the dead accompanied by mourning (third stasimon - first kommos), the carrying out of the dead and the pronouncement of the funeral oration, received by renewed lamentation (fourth episode - fourth stasimon), the cremation of the bodies off-stage (the time needed for this is filled by the Evadne-scene), and finally the bringing back of the ashes of the dead, which provokes further expressions of grief (second kommos). However, as is generally noticed,[4] in this theatrical representation Euripides interweaves elements from a private and a public Athenian funeral (characterized mainly by a private family mourning and a eulogy for the war dead respectively), which do not always accord well with each other.

The chorus[5] sing the third stasimon (778-793) while waiting for the arrival of the bodies of the dead. The lamenting mood of this ode continues into the subsequent kommos (798-837), while the affinity in themes and tone between the two pieces is stressed by the metrical resemblance between them, iambic metre throughout apart from an enoplian (778=786), two dochmiacs (804=817, 825) and a dactylic hexameter (808=821). The sequence of a choral ode and a kommos with the interruption of an entrance announcement in between, as found in *Supp.* 778ff, is quite common (cf. *Pers.* 852ff,[6] *Sept.* 822ff,[7] *Ant.* 781ff, *Herc.* 1016ff). As Zuntz (1955a, 11) remarks, the first kommos of *Supp.* is preceded, like the above mentioned Aeschylean ones, by an ode "contrasting achievement and loss and looking back upon the past".

What the mothers had wanted from the beginning of the play was to have the bodies of their sons restored to them. However, now that their arrival is imminent, they realize that the fulfilment of their desire will be all the more painful for them.[8] Their contradictory feelings are described at the

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[4]For example, Whitehorne (1986, 68-69), Hose (1991, II. 268), Foley (1993, 123).

[5]Although the number of *choreutae* seems to be problematical in view of the insistence on number seven (e.g. 12, 102, 963-64), most scholars agree that this number is symbolic, not literal, and accept that the chorus is represented by 15 members. See Hourmouziades (1965, 81), Smith (1966, 155ff), Collard (1975, I. 18).

[6]Here the announcement is made by Xerxes himself at his entrance, 908ff.

[7]In this case the two lyric pieces are united through iambic metre as well.

[8]As Smith (1966, 153) puts it, the second half of the play presents in a negative light what was positive in the first part. Gamble (1970, 394ff) views this contradictory reaction as an example of Euripides' concern to demonstrate the doubleness of life.

very beginning of the stasimon (778 τὰ μὲν εἶ, τὰ δὲ δυστυχῆ), explained in the rest of the stanza with the symmetrical antithesis πόλει μέν (779) - ἐμοὶ δέ (782): what constitutes a success for the community is a cause of pain for the individual.[9] The pleonastic expression εἰσιδεῖν...θέαμα...ὄψομαι...ἰδοῦσα (782-85) anticipates the fear of the mothers at the sight of the dead bodies, which is probably effected in the last two lines of the antistrophe (792 νῦν δέ) and announced in a conventional way in the anapaestic lines that follow (794ff).

The bodies of five of the Seven (those of Amphiaraus and Polyneices are missing) are set down in the orchestra[10] and become the centre of attention throughout the episode till line 954, when the whole procession moves out for the cremations. The constant presence of the bodies in this scene defines all the dramatic events that take place.[11] The funeral procession and the number of persons required in this episode, according to Hourmouziades (1965, 81) more than fifty (i.e. the pallbearers of the five bodies, Adrastus and his attendants, the chorus of mothers and the secondary chorus of the sons of the dead,[12] all these people joined after the end of the kommos by Theseus and his own attendants), makes this scene one of the most spectacular in tragedy. Furthermore, the great number of people present throughout the fourth episode would give the impression of a more life-like funeral enacted in the theatrical space.

The first kommos, which is the intensification of the grief expressed in the previous stasimon, is invited by Adrastus. Like Xerxes in *Pers.*, he recognizes his responsibility for the defeat and death of his comrades, hence

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[9]Cf. the expression of contradictory feelings in a similar context in *Sept*. 825ff.

[10]The large number of participants in this scene makes it certain that the action takes place in the orchestra: see Hourmouziades (1965, 81), Collard (1975, I. 25-26 and *passim*). In addition, 815ff indicate that the mothers are close enough to the bodies to be able to touch them.

[11]For the importance of the display of dead bodies on Attic stage as a means of generating further action see Whitehorne (1986).

[12]Although the boys are first mentioned at line 106, their entry is to be assumed at the beginning of the play (see Collard 1975, I. 19; Rehm 1988, 275, n. 53) and their silent presence throughout it till most probably 954, when they go out with the rest of the funeral procession to attend the cremations (Collard 1975, I. 19; II. 309), in order to come back at 1114. As for the number of persons representing this chorus, opinions differ, as in the case of the main chorus, for example, Hourmouziades (1965, 81) argues for seven Epigoni, Smith (1966, 169, n. 20) for five, probably seconded by other children of the dead. However, I find it more reasonable to suppose that it is represented by the same number of people as the main chorus, so that there is a balance between them.

his wishes he had died together with them in battle (769, 821; cf. *Pers*. 915ff). However, unlike the kommos of *Pers*., the chorus do not blame Adrastus for the disaster, so there is complete unanimity between them throughout it. His leadership in the dirge was implied by the messenger (770 ἄκραντ' ὀδύρῃ ταῖσδέ τ' ἐξάγεις δάκρυ), although Adrastus takes the opposite view (771 αὐταί γ' εἰσὶν αἱ διδάσκαλοι). He prompts the amoibaic θρῆνος with an invitation to the mothers to raise a groan for their dead sons (798-801), to which they respond by apostrophizing them (802-4). As Collard (1975, II. on 802-4) remarks, the change from plural (802 ὦ παῖδες) to singular (804 τὸν θανόντα), which is emphatically placed at the end of their utterance, "isolates the grief of the chorus as individuals." It is noticeable that singulars prevail especially in their exchange with the sons (in both the addresses of the two choruses to each other and in their apostrophes to the dead), which serves to present the communal grief as singularized, and thus to emphasize the uniformity of the feelings of the two participants.

At the beginning of the antistrophe (811ff) Adrastus gives instructions to the pallbearers to bring the bodies of the dead closer, insisting on their bloody appearance (812 σώμαθ' αἱματοσταγῆ). This description is inaccurate since Theseus had washed the corpses (765-66), but it serves, together with the emphasis on their undeserved death (813), to add pathos to the scene. The mothers react expressing their desire to embrace their sons (815-17), although this does not happen: see Collard (1975, II. on 818), who takes Adrastus' phrase ἔχεις ἔχεις (818) in the loose sense "here they are before you" (cf., similarly, his comment on 945). In 941ff Theseus, rebuking Adrastus, does not allow the mothers to approach the bodies of their sons on the grounds that the sight of their mutilated corpses will increase their grief.[13] So the ritual gesture of touching the corpse performed by the close female relatives of the dead remains unfulfilled in this case, while Theseus' concern lest the mothers grieve overmuch and Adrastus' advice to them to endure their pain (947 μένειν χρὴ τλημόνως) are in accordance with Pericles' exhortation in his Funeral Oration to the relatives of the dead to bear their grief stoically (Thuc. II. 44-45).

The public funeral of the Seven has deprived the mothers of their traditional rights of tending the bodies of their sons. So the ritual washing, laying out and dressing of the corpses was performed by Theseus (765-66),

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[13]As Collard (1972, 47; 1975, II. on 940) remarks, the prohibition of the mothers to follow the funeral procession is convenient for the theatrical convention that the chorus may not leave the orchestra during a play.

who makes the final arrangements for the burial as well (934-40). It may also be the case that the mothers are not even allowed to embrace the funerary urns of their sons (1158ff).[14] Despite Adrastus' promise that they may do this (948-49) and their asking for the urns from the sons, Theseus' subsequent words (1165ff) may indicate that they do not finally catch hold of them. The mothers can only lament while any closer contact with the remains of the dead is left to men. Certainly the role of women was much reduced in the public as opposed to the private funerals, but, as Foley (1993, 123) remarks, in this case the suppression of the female role is exceptional even by the standards of Athenian public funerals.

The address to the dead and the wish to embrace them in strophe and antistrophe respectively (802-4, 815-17) raise the emotional tension of the scene and so naturally lead to antilabic verses in both stanzas (805-7, 818-20), where Adrastus gives the lead each time with an exclamation/short phrase, which the chorus complete, so as to fit their case. As their utterances show, they both share the same suffering (cf. Adrastus in 807 ἐπάθομεν ὤ, the chorus in 820 στένεις ἐπ' ἀμφοῖν ἄχη). The two stanzas conclude with two parallel, competitive statements, the chorus again picking up Adrastus' point, in the strophe drawing attention to their misfortune (808-10),[15] in the antistrophe expressing two unfulfilled wishes (821-23). Hose (1991, II. 267) remarks that the dactylic rhythm of 808=821 stands out from its iambic surroundings, giving these verses greater weight, which is stressed in the second case by the heroic tone acquired by the epicisms ἔναρον, στίχες, κονίαισιν.[16]

The epode constitutes the intensification of the suffering Adrastus and the chorus have exhibited in the previous two stanzas. The greater number of resolutions is indicative of the increasing agitation of the two participants, as the chorus describe their gestures of mourning (826-27), which recall the similar ones they performed in the parodos (71ff),[17] and Adrastus continues with three passionate wishes for violent death (829-31), to

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[14]See Hose (1991, II. 277), Foley (1993, 121). However, most scholars believe that they finally touch them, for example, Smith (1966, *passim*), Collard (1975, II. 309), Burian (1985, 145).

[15]For pleonastic expressions such as τέκνων ἄπαιδα (810) denoting intensity of emotion cf. ἄπαιδας...τέκνων (35), μητέρες τέκνων (100, 824-25), πατρός...τοῦ τεκόντος (1133). For other examples see Collard (1975, II. on 33-6a).

[16]Similarly, the dactylic hexameter in *Hel.* 356, where Helen states her intention to commit suicide, gives a heroic tone to her utterance.

[17]As Burian (1985, 146) remarks, "the winning of what they so passionately sought has reduced them to the misery with which they began the play."

be swallowed up by the earth, to be torn in pieces by a whirlwind, to be killed by Zeus' lightning.[18] The first one was the manner of Amphiaraus' death, the third of Capaneus', so it is reasonable to assume that the implication behind these wishes is that Adrastus would prefer to have died together with them (cf. 769, 821). The passionate utterances of both the chorus and Adrastus are marked by recurring tmeses (see p. 103, n. 7), so that both content and phrasing emphasize their extreme agitation. In the last utterance of the epode the tone becomes calmer (832-37). Here the chorus trace the present misfortune to its original causes, the marriages of Adrastus' daughters to Tydeus and Polyneices according to Apollo's deceitful oracle (see 131ff) and the Erinys of Oedipus, the two agents which combined to destroy Argos. The chorus refer to the first one as affecting Adrastus (cf. 832-33, with the anaphoric repetition of πικρούς - πικράν[19]) and the second one as affecting themselves (834-37 ἐς ἡμᾶς ἁ πολύστονος...ἦλθ' Ἐρινύς),[20] so the division of suffering between them emphasizes what has already become evident in the rest of the kommos, namely, that Adrastus suffers no less than the mothers.

Funeral Oration - Evadne-scene

At this point (l. 838) Theseus and his attendants join the mourners. His entrance results in a change of tone from lamentation to praise for the dead, as he asks Adrastus to deliver a funeral speech. The greater number of people assembled in this scene would also give the impression of the change of atmosphere from a private to a public funeral. Although Theseus had rebuked Adrastus for his folly in the earlier part of the play, now he recognizes that he has grown wiser (842-43), so he can instruct the young with

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[18]For similar wishes see p. 114 and Collard (1975, II. on 829-31).

[19]Collard (1975, II. on 832-3) remarks that this is a regular adjective for marriages, which Euripides likes to use in anaphora.

[20]The characterization of the Erinys (πολύστονος) matches that of the marriages (πικρούς) while the postponement of the word till the very end of the sentence is done for emphasis, belonging originally, as Collard (1975, II. 318) remarks, to the technique of the riddle or γρῖφος.

his words.[21] Like the funeral orations held for the war-dead in Kerameikos, Adrastus' speech praises the dead heroes as models for the living.[22] It is also preceded (kommos) and followed (choral songs in 918ff and later 955ff) by lamentation for the dead, as in real life.[23]

After the funeral procession has departed for the cremations Euripides focuses on a private tragedy, Evadne's self-immolation in the funeral pyre of her husband Capaneus and the reaction of her father Iphis to it. This scene, a self-contained episode with two characters who are introduced suddenly and do not appear elsewhere in the play, has received various interpretations.[24] However, most scholars agree that it serves to enhance the suffering of the mothers depicted in the previous scenes and to show the tragic aftermath of the war on the individual as well. Viewed in a wider context, this is another case of the mourning of parents for the loss of their children, a theme pervasive in the play.[25] So this private scene particularizes the communal suffering, but since Evadne and Iphis lack any individuality, that is, their tragedy could in effect apply to any wife or father of the dead,[26] it generalizes their suffering, extending it from the mothers to the wives and fathers as well, so that with the appearance of the sons the circle of those affected by the death of the Seven is widened, and the loss and pain magnified.

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[21]Most scholars believe that νέοισιν ἀστῶν τῶνδ' (843) refers to the young Athenians, but Smith (1966, 169, n. 20) suggests that the speech is better addressed to the sons of the dead so as to be taught by their fathers' valour.

[22]However, this speech has puzzled critics more than any other part of *Supp.*, and opinions are divided on whether it should be taken literally or as a satire of real-life practice, in the sense that it holds up as moral examples mythical criminals. For the first view see, for example, Zuntz (1955a, esp. 13ff), Collard (1972), who interpret the play as an ἐγκώμιον Ἀθηνῶν, and for the second Fitton (1961, esp. 437ff), Smith (1966, esp. 162ff).

[23]However, in real life the funeral oration was delivered over the ashes of the dead, not their bodies, as here, where theatrical convention requires that the cremation takes place off-stage, so the speech precedes it.

[24]For example, Fitton (1961, 441) regards it as the high point of the play, Smith (1966, 164-65) and Foley (1993, 125-26) find ironic hints in it, Conacher (1967, 105) considers it as a rather intrusive scene.

[25]Goff (1995) associates it with the myth of Demeter and Persephone which was celebrated at Eleusis, the place where the supplication of the mothers takes place.

[26]See Hose (1991, II. 271).

As opposed to Evadne's triumphant death, no doubt a spectacular theatrical piece which seems to enact the emotionalism Theseus earlier attempted to control, Iphis exemplifies extreme passivity: he has come to collect the body of his son Eteoclus and witnesses helplessly the death of his daughter. So in the end, deprived of both his children, he declares his intention to die from starvation. His decision to "get out of the way of the young" with his death (1113) prepares for the arrival of the sons, so that the communal drama is resumed at the point where it was left with the departure of the procession.

1123-1164

The entry of the sons carrying the funerary urns of their fathers is another piece of theatrical effect, mirroring in a more touching scene the procession of the pallbearers carrying the bodies of the Seven. In real life it was normally the task of the sons to gather the bones of their fathers from among the ashes,[27] a practice which Euripides exploits for its dramatic effect by introducing a secondary chorus of sons sharing a lament with the main chorus over the funerary urns of the dead.

The greater length of the anapaestic prelude to this kommos (1114-22) and the more extended description of the misery of the mothers it includes (1115-22) in comparison to the shorter one (795-97) of the previous brief announcement indicates the greater pathos inherent in this scene. The effect produced by the shared lament between the sons and the mothers of the dead is more powerful than that of the first kommos, and with it the play reaches its emotional climax.[28] The agitation of the scene is marked in the frequent syncopation and resolution of the iambic metre and the frequent division of the stanzas. In the first and last pair feelings of loss and desolation prevail, while in the central one the sons confirm their decision to take revenge.

The sons begin the first stanza by drawing attention to their grievous task of having to carry the ashes of their fathers (cf. the anadiplosis of φέρω in

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[27]See Burkert (1985, 192).

[28]Zuntz (1955a, 12), who insists on the Aeschylean reminiscences of both kommoi, suggests: "This Aeschylean pathos clashes with the totally different tone of the two parts encompassed by the κομμοί: the rhetoric of Adrastus' funeral speech and the lyricism of Evadne's monody."

their very first line). The burden they carry is not light because of their grief (1125),[29] while their gloomy reflection on its small size (1126)[30] is taken up by the mothers, who develop it in the common *topos* of laments of the contrast between past - present (1129-30).[31] In the antistrophe both groups lament for their loss. The sons give again, as previously, the key-theme of the stanza at its very beginning with the repetition of ἄπαις (1131),[32] while in the rest of it they comment extensively on their orphanhood with a pleonastic expression. The mothers on the other hand react by recalling the labours of their motherhood, which were all in vain (1134-37). This is suggested poignantly by their anaphoric questions starting with ποῦ (1134-35)[33] and the sons' categorical confirmation in the second strophe with the repetition of βεβᾶσιν (1138-39),[34] referring both to the labours of the mothers and the dead themselves.

In response, the mothers give an elaborate description of the condition of the dead (1139-41), which, as is generally noticed, finds its simpler form in 533-34, i.e. that in death each element of the living returns to the place where it came from, the spirit to the air, the body to the earth.[35] Prompted by this statement the sons call on their fathers (1142),[36] introducing a new theme, that of revenge. It was the task of a son to take vengeance on the death of his father,[37] so this thought is not surprising, especially in view of the fact that feelings of revenge were often aroused through lamentation (see p. 17, n. 36). What presents problems is the attribution of verse 1144 and its

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[29]Cf. S. *El.* 1139-40. Scholars generally accept that the whole passage of 1125-30 draws on *Ag.* 437-44, the picture of Ares who exchanges light ashes for live bodies.

[30]For this notion cf. also S. *El.* 1113-14, 1142.

[31]For a similar idea cf. S. *El.* 757-58, 1158-59. For εὐδοκίμων (1130) cf. κλεινοτάτους (965), also in the context of a contrast between past - present.

[32]Its correspondence to the repetition of φέρω at the beginning of the strophe (1123) as well as that of ἰὼ ἰώ (1127=1134) recall the responsive sound effects of a ritual lament.

[33]For similar questions cf. *Pers.* 956ff, 966ff.

[34]Cf. also ἔβας (1162). For the use of βεβᾶσι and other perfects in the context of lamentation see p. 156.

[35]As Hose (1991, II. 275) remarks, such descriptions belong to the consolatory elements of a funeral oration, which try to comfort the survivors by reflecting on the situation of the deceased.

[36]Their invocation is strongly reminiscent of Electra's appeal to Agamemnon in *Cho.* 332ff.

[37]The most well-known example is obviously that of Orestes dramatized in *Cho.* and the two *El.* plays. Cf. also S. *El.* 846ff, *Herc.* 168ff, *Tro.* 723.

corresponding 1151. If we accept that they form a single utterance together with the two previous verses delivered by the sons (as Diggle 1981a), then the problem is that the sons begin immediately afterwards the next stanza, a sequence not found elsewhere in this kommos or in other extant amoibaia (see Collard 1975, II. 393). If, on the other hand, these lines are attributed to the mothers (as Collard accepts), then their desire for revenge in 1144 is contrasted to their objection in 1146-48, where they foresee further disaster.[38] Furthermore, although it is common in laments for one singer to complete the phrase of the other, and that could no doubt be the case in 1150-51, such a change of voice is more problematic in 1144 where the question mark after σὸν φόνον calls rather for an antilabic verse, which, however, cannot have any correspondence in 1151. All these problems concerning the distribution of parts in the second pair may indicate that the corruption is greater than has been suspected.

The desire of the sons for revenge has often been seen in an ironic light. As Burian (1985, 149) suggests, they assume this role "not as a concession to legendary tradition, but as an outgrowth of the process illustrated by the funeral speech." According to the aims of the funeral oration they were taught to imitate the example of their fathers, without taking into consideration the folly of the whole enterprise and, as a result, the disaster and sorrow it caused.[39] The sons belong to the new generation which has not yet acquired the wisdom and learning of the old, as evidenced, for example, in Adrastus' reflections on the folly of war (734ff, 949ff). Their insistence on revenge proves that unfortunately one can learn only from one's own mistakes (cf. *Ag.* 177 πάθει μάθος). In the outcry of the mothers about the disaster their enterprise is likely to bring (1146ff) we may plausibly trace Euripides' criticism of the madness of war. We should not forget that the play was produced during the Peloponnesian war, most probably after the battle of Delium in 424,[40] and dramatizes the refusal of the Thebans to allow the defeated Athenians to recover and bury their dead.[41]

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[38]Collard (1975, II. 394) tries, unconvincingly I think, to reconcile the two cases.

[39]See Fitton (1961, 439).

[40]For the date of *Supp.* see especially Zuntz (1955a, 88ff), Collard (1975, I. 8ff).

[41]As Whitehorne (1986, 71) suggests, the spectacle of the bodies of the Seven would remind the Athenian audience of their own dead left at Delium. Although I do not intend to talk about the political aspect of the play, it is one of its much-discussed interpretations (e.g. Giles 1890; Zuntz 1955a; Burian 1985).

At the beginning of the second antistrophe the sons wish for divine help in their enterprise for revenge with phrasing (1145-46 ἔτ' ἂν θεοῦ θέλοντος ἔλθοι δίκα πατρῴος) strongly reminiscent of *Cho.* 340 ἀλλ' ἔτ' ἂν ἐκ τῶνδε θεὸς χρήζων (the insistence on the notion of δίκη is also central in the Aeschylean kommos). The wish of the sons prepares for the appearance of Athena, who indeed promises the success of their enterprise (1213ff). σὺν θεῷ (1226) confirms their wish θεοῦ θέλοντος (1145): there is here an implied contrast between the piety of the sons, who seek the help of the gods and will, for this reason, succeed, and the foolishness of Adrastus, who led his expedition against their will, and, as a consequence, failed.

Increasing use of resolution in the final strophic pair conveys the heightened pathos of the scene (cf. the epode of the first kommos), as the thought of revenge gives way to the expression of affection and tenderness for the dead. The sons imagine that they see their fathers before their eyes (1152), a vision which the mothers complete imagining in turn a close embrace (1153).[42] To their feeling of loss the sons add now the words of their fathers, which have vanished in the air like their spirit (1155 recalls 1139), while the mothers conclude the stanza by commenting on their common desolation. At the beginning of the antistrophe the sons comment on the weight they carry, thus picking up in a κύκλος figure the same notion they employed in the first strophe. They may consider βάρος metaphorically (cf. 818 πημάτων βάρος) as well as literally (cf. 1124-25), so the mothers ask to take the urns from them (1159), which moves the sons deeply (1160-61).[43] Finally the kommos reaches its end with a pathetic address of the mothers to their dead sons (1162-64).[44]

The end of the kommos is marked by Theseus' appearance, who brings it to a formal close by requiring from Adrastus that the Argives show

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[42]The exact meaning of this verse depends on the reading we accept: if we read with Collard (1975) φίλον φίλημα...σόν, the mothers imagine that their dead sons kiss them; if, on the other hand, we accept Diggle's reading (1981a) φίλαν φίλημα...σοί, or, alternatively, (1981b, 30) ...σάν, the dead are imagined to kiss their sons. According to Diggle (1981b, 31), in this way we avoid the inconsistency of the mothers addressing the fathers first in the second person (1153) and later in the third (1156), a change of construction Collard (1975, II. on 1157-8) attributes to the mothers' distress.

[43]For ἔθιγέ μου φρενῶν (1161) cf. *Alc.* 108, *Tro.* 1216.

[44]For οὐκέτι...ὄψομαί σε (1162ff) cf. E. *El.* 1331.

an ever-lasting gratitude towards Athens.[45] Athena appears afterwards to correct this simple exchange of χάρις for χάρις by committing Adrastus to swear to a defensive alliance between Argos and Athens (1187ff). Her role as a *dea ex machina* is to relate the mythical events enacted on stage to the contemporary reality (so it is generally accepted that the treaty mentioned here was the one concluded between Athens and Argos in 420 B.C.) and to widen the sphere of the drama by ensuring success for the expedition of the Epigoni (1213ff).[46] As in the other cases of kommoi followed by a divine appearance at the end of the play (see p. 68), so here the wider perspective of the goddess brings consolation to the mourners and comfort to their present suffering, so the final kommos 'closes' in a positive light.

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[45]Similarly, Theseus brings the first kommos to a formal end by asking Adrastus to deliver a funeral speech.

[46]Athena's encouragement to the sons to attack Thebes has often been seen negatively as the command of a harsh goddess who foments a vengeful war: see, for example, Conacher (1967, 108), Fitton (1961, 442). However, the expedition of the Epigoni belongs to the myth and Athena's role is simply to give divine sanction to it.

2. *TROADES* 1287-1332

The death of Astyanax means the loss of the last hope for the rebuilding of Troy (cf. 702-5), and so the final collapse of the city comes as a natural consequence. In a way his funeral symbolizes that of Troy, especially since his coffin is Hector's shield, the sign of his bravery in battle. The lament for Troy, coming so soon after that for Astyanax, would no doubt have evoked this parallelism in the minds of the spectators. In fact, the two scenes are closely interwoven, as the choral anapaests concluding the lament for Astyanax (1251-55) are followed immediately by another anapaestic section (1256-59) expressing the surprise of the women (introduced by the interjection ἔα ἔα) at the flames they see on the walls of Troy, which marks the transition from the one lamenting piece to the other.

This is effected by Talthybius' appearance in 1260 (his last in the play)[1] in order to give instructions to the men appointed to set fire to Troy as well as to the Trojan women and Hecuba, who have to start moving shortly towards the Greek ships. In response, Hecuba delivers an iambic utterance (1272-83) which prepares for the final kommos (1287ff), as all the themes she touches here find there their lyric expression: the burning of Troy and the departure of the women from their homeland as slaves (1274, 1279-80), the indifference of the gods (1280-81), the contrast between the glorious past of Troy and the annihilation that awaits her (1277-78). In her despair Hecuba attempts to throw herself in the flames (1282-83), thus indicating her desire to share the death of her city. Lee (1976, on 1282) remarks that πυράν (literally funeral pyre) has been deliberately chosen, as Hecuba considers the flames burning Troy as the pyre of the city, which she wishes to make her own funeral pyre as well.[2] The lament for the destruction of Troy can indeed be likened to that for a dead person, as it is repeatedly personified throughout the play with the attribution of adjectives such as δύστηνος (173), τάλαινα (780,

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[1]For a discussion of his character and role in *Tro.* see Gilmartin (1970).

[2]Hecuba is the embodiment of Troy from the beginning of the play. Her prostrate, motionless figure while Poseidon narrates Troy's misfortunes in the prologue symbolizes the destruction of the city itself, a parallelism made evident in the use of language as well: cf. the participle πορθηθεῖσα (9) referring to the devastation of Troy and the compound ἐκπορθηθεῖσα (142) describing Hecuba's shaven head, a sign of mourning.

1324, 1331),[3] in the first and last case in a pathetic apostrophe to it. So the final exit of Hecuba and the chorus (1327ff) can be viewed as a funeral procession, and thus be paralleled to that for Astyanax (1246ff).

The final kommos of *Tro*. can be paralleled to the corresponding one of *Pers*. Both are enacted exclusively by Orientals, led by their king or queen, which shows his/her excessive suffering. However, an important difference is that the ethnic identity, the oriental colour so much emphasized in the kommos of *Pers*., is almost entirely lacking from that of *Tro*. In the latter case the indulgence in grief is more evidently to be accounted for by the female identity of the chorus. Another difference between the two kommoi is that whereas in *Pers*. the chorus originally blame Xerxes for the disaster, in *Tro*. there is unanimity between the participants from its very beginning. In both plays, the dominant emphasis is on the totality of the disaster which engulfs the participants, although in *Pers*. the Persian empire continues to exist in the survival of the humbled figure of Xerxes, whereas the atmosphere at the end of *Tro*., with the physical destruction of Troy, is one of unrelieved desolation and annihilation. The greater expansiveness of the kommos in *Pers*. is thus in no sense a marker of greater intensity of pain and suffering. The 'open' ending of the two kommoi, and thus of the plays themselves, is marked by the absence of a formal anapaestic closure by the chorus, in contrast to what is the case in most tragedies. This also indicates that the chorus are so much involved in suffering that they cannot distance themselves from it and deliver an anapaestic conclusion, as, for example, the chorus in *Ant*. do after the end of Creon's lament, in which they do not participate.

The kommos of *Tro*. is arranged in two strophic pairs (1287-93=1294-1301,[4] 1302-16=1317-32), the first much shorter than the second. The structure of the stanzas, single division in the first pair leading to multiple division in the second, and the use of iambic metre throughout, with frequent syncopation and high resolution (lines 1288, 1300, 1313, 1328 are entirely resolved), mark its ritual character. This scene provides the pathos and the emotional intensity lacking from the lament for Astyanax, which is pervaded by a surprisingly calm mood.[5] Now Hecuba assumes the leadership, as she did in the parodos, with the chorus answering or completing her statements.

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[3]For this characterization of Troy cf. also *Hec*. 913, *Hel*. 362.

[4]The text in this part is corrupt in several places and not everybody agrees that it is strophic. See Lee (1976, on 1287ff) and Dale (1983, 234), who calls it prooimion.

[5]See Mead (1938-39, 107). Certainly this mood serves to underline the paradoxical circumstances of his funeral.

By contrast, in the lament for Astyanax they tried to exhort her towards lyric expression of her grief and antiphony without much success.

Hecuba begins both stanzas of the first pair with a prolonged ὀτοτοτοτοῖ, an interjection often marking the beginning of a dirge (see p. 90). In the strophe she continues with a solemn invocation of Zeus, inviting him to look at the suffering of the Trojans with a reproachful question (1290 τάδ' οἷα πάσχομεν δέδορκας;).[6] The chorus answer immediately with δέδορκεν placed emphatically at the beginning of 1291, thus showing only the vanity of this appeal. The invocation of the gods is of no use any longer, as Hecuba herself has already declared (469ff, 1280ff). They have abandoned Troy to perish without caring about the many sacrifices of the Trojans to them (1242 μάτην δ' ἐβουθυτοῦμεν). The gods' indifference to the suffering of the Trojans is a recurrent theme, treated extensively in the second and third stasimon (cf. 820ff, 1060ff respectively). The chorus emphasize the bitter reality of the destruction of Troy with the oxymoron μεγαλόπολις ἄπολις and the juxtaposition of ὄλωλεν[7] and οὐδ' ἔτ' ἔστι[8] (1291-93). In the antistrophe both Hecuba and the chorus give a vivid description of what could not be presented on stage, the consuming of the city by the fire.

The second strophe has a more ritual character than the previous two stanzas. It is mainly an invocation of the dead (1304 ἰαλέμῳ τοὺς θανόντας ἀπύεις) as a last farewell to them, since the women have to depart shortly (1310 ἀγόμεθα φερόμεθ'). Hecuba invokes the earth that has received her dead children (1302), her children themselves (1303) and later Priam (1312-14), accompanying her invocations with the ritual gestures of kneeling on the ground and beating it with her hands (1305-6).[9] The chorus perform the same gestures in turn (1307 διάδοχά σοι) while calling their dead husbands (1308-9). The picture of fifteen women and Hecuba on their knees beating the earth must have a really powerful effect, which is reinforced by repeated vocatives (1302 ἰὼ γᾶ, 1303 ὦ τέκνα, 1312 ἰὼ ἰώ, Πρίαμε Πρίαμε), the urgent imperatives κλύετε, μάθετε (1303) and the assonance of α and ο in 1313-14.[10]

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[6]Cf. the similar question in S. *El.* 823ff.

[7]Cf. ἔρρει (107), ἔρρεις (173).

[8]For the same phrase cf. 1323 and, similarly, οὐκέτι Τροία τάδε (99-100).

[9]For this ritual practice for invoking the spirits of the dead see also *Pers.* 683, *Cho.* 375-76, E. *El.* 678.

[10]Repeating privatives, as here ἄταφος ἄφιλος...ἄιστος, are frequent in lamenting language (see pp. 102-3). Poole (1976, 265) notices in particular that adjectives of deprivation as well as φροῦδος are recurrent in *Tro.*

In her invocation of Priam Hecuba draws a parallelism between his and her misery, insisting on his unburied state (1313 ἄταφος ἄφιλος). War has disturbed the propriety of funerary rites (cf. also the chorus' description of their dead husbands in 1085 ἄθαπτος ἄνυδρος),[11] a theme carefully exploited in the execution of Astyanax's funeral.[12] However, implicitly Hecuba considers Priam more fortunate than herself since, being dead, he is unaware of her misfortune (1314 ἄτας ἐμᾶς ἄιστος εἶ).[13] The chorus complement Hecuba's statement with the oxymoron θάνατος ὅσιος ἀνοσίοις σφαγαῖσιν (1316): Priam's death is considered holy although its manner, slaughter at the altar of Zeus, was sacrilegious, because it prevented him from seeing the final destruction of Troy and suffering their own degradation.[14]

The antistrophe is mainly a lament for Troy, as the strophe is a lament for the dead Trojan men. Like the first antistrophe, it describes the complete dissolving of the city in smoke and ashes, which now culminates in the collapse of the towers. Hecuba's phrasing in 1320, where she compares the dissipation of the city to smoke that rises into the air, recalls that of the chorus from 1298-99. In 1319 and 1322 the chorus insist on the anonymity that awaits Troy, a theme on which Hecuba also commented in 1277-78, which is in contrast to her previous statement that Troy's fate will become a subject for poets (1242-45). The name of Troy has indeed survived through song. In 1325 Hecuba addresses the chorus with the questions ἐμάθετ', ἐκλύετε; (cf. the imperatives with which she addresses her dead children in 1303), thus drawing their attention to the sound of the towers as they fall.

This marks the end of the existence of Troy as a city, so what is now left for Hecuba and the other women is to make their way towards the Greek ships, which means the beginning of their slavery, δούλειον ἀμέραν βίου (1330), which recalls δούλειον ὑπὸ μέλαθρον (1311). Both Hecuba and the chorus point to their departure with self-exhortations (cf. 1329, 1332

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[11]For an extensive discussion of this theme see Croally (1994, 74ff).

[12]Andromache is prevented from offering funerary rites to her son, since she must leave for Greece (1129ff, 1145-46), so Hecuba undertakes her role adorning the dead body with the poor means she has got (1143-44, 1200-2). The washing of the corpse and the burial are undertaken by an enemy, Talthybius (1151-53), which also undermines the usual practice that funerary rites lay with the relatives of the deceased, while the whole ceremony has to be accomplished as quickly as possible (1149, 1154-55). For Astyanax's funeral see Dyson - Lee (2000).

[13]For the theme that the dead are more fortunate than the living see p. 116.

[14]See Lee (1976, on 1315-16).

respectively).[15] Noticeably, Hecuba starts and finishes her part in the play with exhortations to herself (cf. in her monody 98, 99, 101, 102, 103) and with mirroring movement: there she raises herself from the ground to sing a lament, here the lament has to be terminated as it is time for her and the other women to drag their feet to exile. The dramatic effect of the scene is probably reinforced by the sound of the trumpet signalling that they have to depart (cf. Talthybius' words in 1266-67).[16]

The final kommos is the culmination and the ritual enactment on stage of the grief repeatedly expressed throughout the play, and mirrors by ring composition the lamentation between Hecuba and the chorus in the parodos. Now the destruction of Troy has been completed and the Trojan women are moving towards the Greek ships, a movement towards which the action from the beginning of the play leads in a powerful climax. The reference to them in the last verse of the play (1332) resumes the anguish the Trojan women had expressed in the parodos in the thought that they would carry them away from their homeland (cf. 161-62, 167, 180-81). What was presented there as a fearful expectation has now become reality, a parallelism very similar to that of *Pers*. In both the parodos and the exodos of *Tro*. the chorus suffer as much as Hecuba, as they are associated with her through the same fate. However, she is in a worse position than they; she has experienced a terrible change of fortune, namely, from a queen she has been brought low to a slave (cf. the emphatic contrast she draws in her agitated lament in 190-96), and has suffered more losses than anyone else. So it is reasonable to suggest that the suffering of the chorus serves to foreground hers, which is made evident by the fact that she assumes the leadership in both laments. By contrast, in the lament for Astyanax Hecuba mourns for her personal loss, whereas the chorus, though deeply moved, are not personally affected, but see in his death the loss of the future of the city. They are in the position of the women who bewail in the background after each γόος for Hector in *Iliad* 24.

Hecuba and the chorus constitute a continuous presence throughout the play after the prologue (Hecuba is present during it as well, but silent), which gives it the cohesion critics generally agree that it lacks as an episodic play each scene of which concentrates on a different individual. Sienkewicz

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[15]Characteristic of the last verse of the play is the sounding effect of the alliteration of π. This is also the case in the final verses of the kommos of *Sept*. (1000ff) and the last one of *Cho*. (478).

[16]The exit of the women is considerably delayed despite Talthybius' instructions (1285-86), so that the kommos can be completed. Cf. Antigone's delayed exit in *Ant*. despite Creon's orders (see pp. 224-25 and n. 39).

(1978, 85) argues that the chorus alone is the central character of the play and that it serves as a unifying force:[17] "The chorus is the only principal in the *Trojan Women* that adequately incorporates the identity of the entire city and its tragedy. The individual characters are included in this collective tragedy, but they each give only partial aspects of it." Only a chorus with such an identity would be suitable to perform a lament for Troy (cf. the identity of the chorus in *Pers.*). However, I think that Hecuba's continuous presence strongly suggests that she shares with the chorus the role of the 'central character' of the play.

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[17]In fact, he compares the collective identity of the chorus in this play with that of the choruses in A. and E. *Supp.*, *Eum.*

3. *HELEN*

164-252

The prologue of *Hel.* is divided into two sections, a monologue delivered by Helen and a dialogue between her and Teucer. In the monologue the spectators get all the necessary information about the innovations of the myth Euripides follows (cf. Ar. *Thesm.* 850 καινὴ Ἑλένη) and are also informed of Hermes' prediction to Helen that one day she will inhabit Sparta with Menelaus (56ff). Euripides often foreshadows the action of the play by a prediction given in the prologue, which, as a result, helps to manipulate the expectations of the audience, but, as Hamilton (1978, 277) remarks, such predictions do not influence the coming action, with the exception of *I.T.* So, although Helen reports Hermes' prophecy in her monologue, she forgets it completely when she hears from Teucer that Menelaus is dead (123ff), even though his information is second-hand (cf. 126, 132 κλήζεται). However, the audience will remember it, so when they hear Helen lamenting for Menelaus' death they will know that her suffering, although real, is unjustified, and thus will be expecting Menelaus' arrival. Furthermore, Helen's misinformation helps to make the subsequent recognition scene more exciting.

Teucer's unexpected arrival has been much discussed. His role is obviously informative, but he is certainly not a mere messenger, as Whitman (1974, 40) suggests; his appearance serves other purposes as well. So Kannicht argues (1969, II. 12, 37) that it reveals the hatred the whole of Greece feels towards Helen and (I. 54, II. 37) that Teucer himself and his fate is a representative example of the suffering she has caused to Trojans and Greeks alike.[1] Certainly Helen's confrontation with Teucer influences the subsequent course of action, as the news he reports prompts her lamentation (cf. 194-95). As Wilson (1967, 217-18) argues, a dialogic scene preceding a monody in the prologue serves to heighten the effect of the monody.

Helen's lamentation constitutes of two kommoi (164-252, 330-385) separated by an iambic scene, the first of which is mingled with the parodos while the second is in the place of the first stasimon, which is, thus, delayed

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[1]For other views see Segal (1971, 562-63) and Burnett (1971, 76), who see Teucer's arrival in the light of the doubling of images which is prevalent throughout the play, i.e. as Menelaus' and Helen's double respectively, that is, another sailor who has lost his way back or an exile who suffers undeservedly.

till line 1107. While the first amoibaion is prompted by Teucer's news, the second is prompted by the suggestion of the chorus that Helen should inquire from Theonoe about Menelaus' fate (315ff). The whole of this composition (164-385) is characterized by unity in participants (Helen and the chorus throughout), in theme (Helen's lot) and partly in the structure and metre of the lyric pieces (see below and pp. 257ff). The fact that the two threnetic amoibaia are found in the first four hundred lines of the play and so close to each other helps to emphasize Helen's grief and despair, so as to exalt the reversal of her fortune in the rest of the play.

The structure of the parodos is unique in extant tragedy. It is as follows: pro-ode (Hel.), str. a (Hel.), ant. a (chor.), str. b (Hel.), ant. b (chor.), epode (Hel.), which means that the choral entry song is introduced as an antistrophe, thus the actor is the leader of the amoibaion and there is metrical correspondence between solo and choral song. What normally happens is that a rhesis or a metrically independent monody is delivered by the actor before the arrival of the chorus[2] and after their entrance the parodos takes the following form: str. a (chor.-actor), ant. a (chor.-actor) etc., so that choral song corresponds metrically to choral song and solo to solo.[3] The closest parallel to the parodos of *Hel.* is that of *Hypsip.*, where the chorus enter in the middle of the first strophe. However, if its structure is: str. a (Hyps.-chor.), ant. a (Hyps.-chor.), epode (Hyps.),[4] then again there is no correspondence between the song of the chorus and that of the actor.

The pro-ode is dactylic consisting of two dactylic hexameters and what is generally accepted as a pentameter,[5] which, according to Dale (1968, 28), are recitative. Here Helen announces formally the beginning of her dirge with the participle καταβαλλομένα (164),[6] wondering in what way she will

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[2]In the parodos of *Hel.* the pro-ode may be seen as an adaptation of this device.

[3]For a discussion of the structure of the parodoi-amoibaia see Kannicht (1969, II. 59).

[4]See Bond (1963, 61).

[5]For the problems in metre and content this verse poses see Kannicht (1969, II. 60) and Willink (1990, 79-80), who prefers to delete it, arguing that "it derives from an explanatory scholion offering alternative glosses" (80). However, in view of the fact that the accumulation of similar terms is frequent in tragedy (see p. 75), this verse is appropriate to enhance the pathos of Helen's question, thus culminating in her subsequent cry.

[6]καταβάλλομαι is a technical term meaning 'lay down as a foundation' (see *LSJ* s.v. καταβάλλω, II. 7). Willink (1990, 78, n. 9) suggests that the sense 'begin (a song)' may be by analogy to κατάρχομαι, which is used to denote the beginning of a ritual procedure (see p. 120, n. 29).

lament her sorrows better (165). Alternatives such as those she gives are frequent in similar contexts in Euripides (cf. *Hec.* 154ff, *Herc.* 1025ff, *Pho.* 1498ff, *Hypsip.* I. iv. 5ff), which reinforces the argument that μοῦσαν should be taken in the sense of musical mode/inspiration[7] (cf. *I.T.* 181ff), rather than in a personified sense (=Μοῦσαν),[8] since the Sirens Helen invokes in the first strophe will provide the kind of music appropriate for her lament, but they are not actually Muses. If, as I think more probable, ἁμιλλαθῶ (165) includes the idea of contest, in the sense that Helen anticipates the arrival of the chorus and the contest of laments between them (cf. E. *Supp.* 71 ἀγὼν ὅδ' ἄλλος...γόων),[9] it stresses the self-referential artifice of the scene, already suggested in her explicit statement that she is starting a lament.

After the dactylic pro-ode the metre of the amoibaion changes to trochaic[10] with occasional iambic cola. Although its exact description is controversial because of the corruption of the text, especially in the first strophic pair, it is generally agreed that most of the cola are dimeters with few trimeters (e.g. 195=214, 238, 244), with some syncopation and high resolution (some verses are wholly resolved, e.g. 173=185). The first strophic pair is a characteristic example of Euripides' habit of pointing to the musical quality of his dirges as such. Both stanzas are abundant in musical terms defining Helen's lament, with decorative and highly descriptive language, while nothing is mentioned about the misfortunes Teucer reported to her in the prologue; the object of her lamentation is reserved for the second strophic pair and the epode.[11]

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[7]See Dale (1967, on 165), Willink (1990, 79).

[8]This is the reading Kannicht (1969) prints in his text. See also Hose (1990, I. 96).

[9]See also Willink (1990, 79): "the verb is consistent also with ideas of 'concerted performance' and 'projection' " and, similarly, Dale (1967, on 165), although she argues that in this case it means little more than 'contribute', 'utter'. Downing (1990, 13) suggests that verses like this one (165) point to Euripides' self-reflexive representation of his own participation in an *agon* with his play.

[10]Dale (1968, 92) remarks that continuous trochaics appear in Euripides' late plays (*Hel.*, *Pho.*, *Or.*, *I.A.*), whereas they are almost entirely absent from his early and middle ones.

[11]What constitutes Iphigeneia's first utterance (definition of her song, narration of her miseries) in the parodos of *I.T.*, which presents a great similarity to that of *Hel.*, is developed in *Hel.* as two separate stanzas (1st and 2nd str.). Similarly, the reply of the chorus in *I.T.* corresponds to the 1st and 2nd ant. of *Hel.*, although there greater emphasis is given to the fortunes of the οἶκος of Atreus than to Iphigeneia's miseries.

The strophe, characterized by a dark, gloomy atmosphere of the underworld, gives the answer to the question Helen posed in the pro-ode: she invites the Sirens to accompany her lament with their music. As Kannicht (1969, II. on 167-78) argues, her description of them (167 πτεροφόροι νεάνιδες, 168 Χθονὸς κόραι, 174ff μουσεῖα associated with Φερσέφασσα) identifies them as 'Hades- oder Grabsirenen', which appeared on the Attic grave *stelai* from the 5th cent. onwards. The invocation of the Sirens is, then, in accordance with the interweaving of the motifs of eros and thanatos which is pervasive throughout the play,[12] since they are funerary figures, but still have erotic associations.[13] This last remark points to their association with Helen, in the sense that both cause destruction through their beauty,[14] a recurrent theme in the play.

The first strophe presents serious textual problems with the result that the syntax, and thus the meaning, are disputed. Most editors print μόλοιτ' in verse 170, which means that Helen is actually asking the Sirens to come as her fellow-mourners. However, Willink (1990, 85ff) argues that the meaning must be that Helen asks the Sirens to accompany her lament from the underworld, thus he proposes the reading ὁμιλοῖτ' in the sense 'participate, consort with'. He also accepts πέμψαιτε in 174, with μουσεῖα (174) as subject and δάκρυα, πάθεα, μέλεα (172, 173) as objects, rejecting the reading πέμψειε of ms L, which requires μουσεῖα as its object and Φερσέφασσα as subject, on the grounds that μουσεῖα, 'halls of song', cannot be 'sent'.[15] Willink's interpretation solves some textual problems, but the idea that the Sirens will sing from the underworld is awkward. The term ξυνῳδά (174), pointing to the role of the chorus in accompanying the singing of the actor, suggests a close contact between the two. In fact, in all the other cases in tragedy where this adjective, or a similar one, is used, the second participant is present or is desired to be present: *Or.* 132-33 (πάρεισι), E. *Supp.* 73-74 (ἵτ'), *Herc.* 786-87 (βᾶτε), *Hel.* 1111-12 (ἔλθ'). The above examples arguably support the reading μόλοιτε, an invocation which would certainly have a strong dramatic effect, as it is answered by the arrival of the chorus, who will play the role Helen expected the Sirens to do. Furthermore, the antiphonal effect to which the phrase πάθεσι πάθεα μέλεσι μέλεα (173) points can be achieved

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[12]For this theme see Wolff (1973, 62ff).

[13]See Wolff (1973, 65, n. 12).

[14]See Hartigan (1981, 28).

[15]He agrees (89) with Kannicht (1969, II. on 173-6) that the word can denote persons, a 'choir', but only if they function *in situ*.

only through the actual presence of the chorus. Therefore, I think that the interpretation of the stanza is better if Helen actually invokes the Sirens to come.

The invocation of these figures is particularly appropriate for the occasion. They were excellent musicians (Helen also points to their musical instruments in the problematic passage 170-71),[16] and so they will provide the music she required for her lament. Furthermore, the appeal to these creatures of the underworld as well as the reference to Persephone, with all the chthonic associations they evoke, are appropriate for the object of Helen's dirge, the death of her beloved persons. The myth of Persephone is prominent in the play (cf. the second stasimon 1301ff), and is also associated with the story of Helen: she was carried away by Hermes while she was gathering flowers (244ff), like Persephone when she was kidnapped by Hades. Also, they both function as brides of death: for Helen the removal to Egypt is a kind of living death (286).

After the dark, gloomy atmosphere of mourning and the underworld in the strophe, the antistrophe begins with bright, peaceful tones, as the chorus describe their activity of drying clothes near the water, placing emphasis on the colours (179 κυανοειδὲς ὕδωρ, 181-82 φοίνικας πέπλους), the sunshine (182 χρυσέαισιν αὐγαῖς) and the greenery (180 ἕλικα χλόαν, 183 δόνακος ἔρνεσιν). However, this serene, idealized atmosphere, was disturbed by wild cries, so they have come to find out what is happening.[17] They justify their entry with a verb of hearing (184 ἔκλυον),[18] as the chorus usually do when the parodos is prompted by cries or some other noise,[19] and proceed to describe what the cries they heard sounded like. The accumulation of terms they use shows that they find it difficult to do so. All the words they choose

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[16]The wind instruments (Λίβυν λωτὸν ἢ σύριγγας) were appropriate for a dirge (see p. 51); what is more problematic is the reference to the lyre (ἢ φόρμιγγας), which usually accompanied joyful songs, an issue I will not discuss here. For different views see Dale (1967, on 185), Willink (1990, 87-88).

[17]The *locus amoenus* of 179ff recalls the similar description in *Hipp.* 121ff (stressed by verbal reminiscences as well), which is also disturbed by the news concerning the afflicted queen. The difference, however, is that in *Hel.* the chorus do not know yet who is in distress.

[18]It seems better to delete ἀνεβόασεν of ms L (184) since it has no subject, and I do not think that it is reasonable to suppose, as Kannicht does (1969, II. on 183-7), that the chorus already know who cried, assuming that Theoclymenus has attacked Helen.

[19]Kannicht (1969, II. on 179-90) states these cases. The closest parallel is *Med.* 131 ἔκλυον φωνάν, ἔκλυον δὲ βοάν. Cf. also *Tro.* 155 ἄιον οἴκτους, *Hipp.* 129-30 ὅθεν μοι...φάτις ἦλθε.

point to shrill cries: οἰκτρὸν ὄμαδον,[20] ἄλυρον ἔλεγον, ἔλακεν,[21] αἰάγμασι στένουσα, γοερόν,[22] κλαγγαῖσι,[23] ἀναβοᾷ, so the part of the antistrophe after 184ff is dominated by acoustic images in contrast to the prevalent visual ones in 179ff. They think of a female, non-human being, a Naiad, as Helen in the strophe invoked some other female otherworldly creatures.

The comparison of the Naiad being pursued by Pan brings obviously to mind the pursuit of Helen by Theoclymenus, and emphasizes the rape/abduction-theme, which is central in the play (Leda's rape by Zeus, Helen's abduction by Paris to Troy and by Hermes to Egypt). Characteristic of these cases is that they are associated with natural landscapes, the archetypal parallel being, of course, the myth of Persephone. In trying to define the place from where the cries originated, the chorus decide that they came ὑπὸ πέτρινα γύαλα (188-89), a phrase which corresponds to the similar one of the strophe ὑπὸ μέλαθρα νύχια (176-77), evoking the ominous associations of the underworld. So the antistrophe, although it started with bright pictures, concludes with the dark image of mourning that comes beneath the earth, which recalls the dirge Persephone will receive in the underworld (176ff).

In the second strophic pair contact between Helen and the chorus is finally achieved. She identifies the previously called Sirens as θήραμα βαρβάρου πλάτας (191)[24] and Ἑλλανίδες κόραι (192), thus pointing to their status as Greek captive women, while they address the supposed Naiad as γύναι (212). The fact that the chorus were washing purple clothes means, according to Kannicht (1969, II. on 182-3), that they are in the service of the palace. Willink (1990, 93, n. 79), however, suggests that they have rather an outsider status, as their entry from outside the palace indicates (as in the similar choral entries of *Med.* and *Hipp.*), and that there is no reason for supposing as, for example, Barlow (1971, 22) does, that they are Helen's

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[20]ὄμαδος, used especially of the confused voices of a number of men (see *LSJ* s.v. ὄμαδος), seems to have had some association with the sound of pipes and flutes (cf. *Il.* 10. 13 αὐλῶν συρίγγων τ' ἐνοπὴν ὄμαδόν τ' ἀνθρώπων). So here it is associated with ἄλυρον ἔλεγον.

[21]Willink (1990, 93, n. 77) notes that this verb was used with reference to pipe-accompaniment (cf. *Alc.* 346ff πρὸς Λίβυν λακεῖν αὐλόν). Especially associated with pipes and syrinxes was, of course, Pan, mentioned in 190.

[22]Probably defining νόμον, if we accept Matthiae's proposal instead of the reading γάμων (188) of the mss, which is senseless and unmetrical.

[23]This noun is used to denote the high-pitched cries of a bird (cf. the simile in *Tro.* 146ff).

[24]As Podlecki (1970, 409) remarks, the hunting-image recurs throughout the play (e.g. 51, 63, 314, 545, 981). Helen herself was also the prey of a barbarian oar, βαρβάρῳ πλάτᾳ (234, 1117).

servants.[25] Whatever their exact status, their role is to sympathize with Helen's misfortunes, thus they resemble other female, sympathetic choruses (cf., for example, those of *El.*, *I.T.*, *Or.*).

So Helen proceeds to inform them of the disastrous news Teucer - now vaguely ναύτας Ἀχαιῶν τις (194) - brought her, namely, the destruction of Troy (196-97), Leda's suicide (200-1), Menelaus' death in the sea (203-4), the disappearance of the Dioscuri from Sparta (205-210).[26] Concerning Menelaus' fate, she presents as true what Teucer had presented as rumour (126, 132), while from the two versions he gave about the fate of her brothers (138ff), she forgets the possibility of their deification. Twice in this stanza Helen emphasizes her responsibility for what has happened (198-99, 201-2). In 198-99 she hints at the paradox of her existence with two symmetrical phrases (δι' ἐμὲ τὰν πολυκτόνον, δι' ἐμὸν ὄνομα πολύπονον),[27] the second being in fact a correction of the first: it is not she herself but her name[28] that is responsible for the destruction of Troy. Similarly, in 201-2 she blames her mother's death on her own shameful reputation.

Characteristic in this stanza is the recurrent use of the first person: 195 μοι, 198 δι' ἐμέ, 199 δι' ἐμόν, 202 ἐμᾶς, 203 ὁ δ' ἐμός. On the contrary, in the antistrophe Helen becomes the object of the chorus' attention, hence the use of the second person throughout it: 212 σᾶς, 214, 224 σε, 217 σοι, 226 ὁ δὲ σός. The actual contact between Helen and the chorus in the second pair results in narrative in relatively simple language in contrast to the highly ornate language of the first pair. It also allows for antiphony (219ff), as the chorus repeat Helen's misfortunes, recapitulating them with shorter phrases.[29] This arrangement can be viewed as an adaptation within the structure of two long stanzas of the quick, antiphonal exchanges of a

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[25]Dale (1967, on 179-90) also shares the same opinion.

[26]The adjective ἀφανές she uses for her brothers (207) was used by Teucer with reference to Menelaus (126).

[27]A series of πολυ- compound adjectives is used in this pair to denote great suffering (cf. also 203 πολυπλανής, 211 πολυστόνου).

[28]ὄνομα is a dominant motif throughout the play (e.g. 43, 66, 87, 250) as well as the antithesis between ὄνομα and πρᾶγμα, for which see Solmsen (1934). The philosophical allusions evoked by the discrepancy between these two notions are a central theme in the play, and, as Griffith (1953) argues, the audience were meant to take the play in this intellectualist sense, although others prefer to see it as a more light-hearted one (cf. Pippin 1960; Knox 1979, 256ff).

[29]I have not found such a detailed repetition in the antistrophe of themes stated in the strophe in any other kommatic exchange.

traditional lament. So μάτηρ (219) is in exactly the same position in the stanza as Λήδα (200), οἴχεται (219) is the verb Helen used to denote Menelaus' death (204), δίδυμα (220) recalls διδυμογενές (206), ὁ δὲ σὸς ἐν ἁλί (226) is an exact echo of ὁ δ' ἐμός ἐν ἁλί (203), λέλοιπε βίοτον (226-27) is in the same position in the stanza as λέλοιπε δάπεδα (207-8), which Helen used with reference to the Dioscuri. This close responsion by the chorus serves to magnify Helen's suffering and to give it a tragic tone. From their list of Helen's misfortunes the chorus omit the capture of Troy, but add instead her misery of being away from her homeland (222) without any possibility of inhabiting it in the future (227-28), which contradicts Hermes' promise (56ff).

I prefer to accept ὀλβιεῖς of the ms tradition in 228[30] rather than ὀλβιεῖ, Bothe's proposal, even though the third person gives a smoother syntax, as the subject of both λέλοιπε (226-27) and ὀλβιεῖ is Menelaus, because throughout the whole stanza the chorus address Helen, and I therefore find it more plausible that they conclude it with a last address to her. After all, what the chorus are interested in are Helen's misfortunes, not Menelaus', and they take her thought further by stressing the effect they have on her life. Menelaus' death is obviously the worst of all (thus it comes, climactically, at the end of their list), since it will deprive her of her homeland for ever (cf. 56ff: her last hope to inhabit Sparta is Menelaus' return). Both strophe and antistrophe conclude with a picture of absence from Sparta, which is defined through the reference to a topographical detail, Eurotas and the cult of Chalkioikon Athena[31] respectively. The future reference of the chorus in 228 reminds Helen of a particular moment in the past in the epode (244ff), her occupation of picking flowers for the goddess when Hermes snatched her away. Her association with the cult of the goddess there is, I think, another reason why ὀλβιεῖς is a better reading in 228. Among Helen's sufferings the chorus also include her bad reputation (223-25) with emphasis on the key-word βάξις, thus taking up her points in 199, 201-2. In their attempt to interpret her many misfortunes - as they state in 217-18,[32] nothing bad is missing from her life - they prefix their detailed list of them with a statement about her bad lot (211ff), which they trace back to the time of her conception (213-16).[33]

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[30]Dale (1967) and Kannicht (1969) also accept the same reading.

[31]As Kannicht (1969, II. on 227-8) remarks, ὀλβιεῖς points to the frequent cultic predicates of gods ὄλβιε, ὀλβία.

[32]For the syntax of 217 cf. *Tro.* 106.

[33]For a similar notion cf. *I.T.* 203ff.

The amoibaion concludes with a long epode by Helen,[34] where she expands the scope of her speculation beyond her recent συμφοραί by going back in time,[35] probably prompted by the choral statement in 213ff. The consideration of her misfortunes from a wider point of view reinforces and enlarges her suffering. In her recapitulation of the past she traces the ἀρχὴ κακῶν to the person who cut down the pine-tree for Paris' ship, with which he sailed to Sparta (229ff).[36] On the one hand his voyage there under Aphrodite's guidance in order to obtain Helen's beauty (232ff) and on the other hand her removal to Egypt by Hermes according to Hera's plan (241ff) reveal the opposition between the two goddesses (cf. the emphatic δέ in 241), which is the focus of the epode as the main cause of the war and Helen's misfortunes. The references to the disastrous acts of Aphrodite and Hera are separated by the interjection ὦ τάλαινα συμφορᾶς (240) which Helen attributes to herself, which, with its emphatic position half-way in the epode, focuses for a moment exclusively on her, the victim of the two goddesses.

The two parts of the epode concerning each one of them have almost the same length, thus stressing their equal share of responsibility in the disaster, and are characterized by a remarkable parallelism in themes. In both cases there is a voyage under the instructions of a goddess who favours Helen's abductor, which resulted in the outbreak of the Trojan war (238-39, 248-49), which was equally destructive for both the Greeks and the Trojans (239 Δαναΐδαις, 249 Πριαμίδαισιν),[37] the object of enmity of Aphrodite and Hera respectively. Finally Helen summarizes her tragedy in the last lines of the epode (250-52), especially in the phrase μαψίδιον φάτιν: her name is the subject of empty talk being separated from herself (the theme that pervades

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[34]Lourenço (2000) deletes it as an interpolation, but I do not find his arguments persuasive.

[35]Cf. also *I.T.* 203ff, where Iphigeneia goes through the major facts of her life. Strohm (1957, 156ff), analyzing the notion of 'Lebensrückblick' in Euripides, notices that it is characteristic of the way he perceives human life: at some stage in one's life one looks back and becomes conscious of the past.

[36]This is a conventional theme (cf. also *Hec.* 629ff), which goes back to *Il.* 5. 62ff (cf., similarly, the cutting of the tree for the construction of Argo in *Med.* 3-4). In other cases the ἀρχὴ κακῶν of the Trojan war is sought in the judgement of Paris or his exposure (cf. *Hec.* 644ff, *Andr.* 274ff, *I.A.* 573ff, 1283ff). For a more extensive discussion of this theme see Kannicht (1969, II. on 229-31). The tracing of a misfortune to its original cause is frequent in laments (cf. also *Aj.* 934ff, 1192ff, *O.T.* 1349ff, E. *Supp.* 832ff).

[37]The non-distinction between victors and sufferers underlies the whole play: see Galeotti (1987).

the whole play). Although the two parts of the epode are thematically related, they are sharply contrasted as far as their imagery is concerned. The first one is characterized by a dark, gloomy atmosphere of suffering and war (231 δακρυόεσαν, 232 ὀλόμενον, 236 δυστυχέστατον,[38] 238 δόλιος, πολυκτόνος,[39] 239 ἄγουσα θάνατον)[40] while the second by a peaceful, bright scenery (241 χρυσέοις θρόνοισι, 244-45 χλοερά...ῥόδεα πέταλα), which is, though, disturbed by Hermes' violent abduction of Helen (247 ἀναρπάσας). This sequence of images, dark contrasted to a following bright one, which is in turn disturbed by a violent act, is the same as that in the first strophic pair, so the amoibaion concludes with the same image with which it started.

The exposition of the events Helen gives in the epode is a lyric expression of her narrative in the prologue (23ff), although there the judgement of Paris and τὰ Διὸς βουλεύματα were also taken into account. So, although in the prologue her removal to Egypt appeared as a benign protection (44ff), a part of Zeus' plan, in the epode 241ff it appears as the act of the jealous Hera in order to set war. In the course of the amoibaion Helen laments first (second strophe) for her recent sufferings, reacting emotionally to Teucer's news, and then (epode) for the original causes of her evils. So the information about her misfortunes we get in the two sections of the prologue (her monologue, her dialogue with Teucer) becomes in reverse order the object of her lamentation in the parodos.

330-385

Unlike the parodos, in the exchange between Helen and the chorus in 330ff the role of the latter is considerably reduced, confined to a series of brief statements, so that Helen evidently dominates it, especially with her long monodic utterances in 348-59, 362-85. Also, unlike the role of the chorus in the parodos where they responded to her lament, now they try to avert her from it by suggesting that Menelaus may not be dead. There Helen had to lament

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[38]Lines 236-37 are problematical and have been deleted by some editors (e.g. Dindorf, Diggle). For the problems they present and a possible emendation see Zuntz (1955b, 68-69).

[39]Helen attributed this adjective to herself in 198. In effect, she is identified with Aphrodite in the sense that they are both murderous, although Helen unwillingly.

[40]Kannicht (1969, II. on 229-51) argues that these attributes indicate the inevitability of the destruction of Troy.

for her misfortunes, according to the tragic conventions, and the chorus willingly joined her in her dirge. Now, however, the plot has to advance, so the questioning by the coryphaeus of the truth of Teucer's information about Menelaus' fate (306ff) together with the subsequent suggestion (315ff) that Helen should ask Theonoe is an effective device towards that direction. Helen herself, although she does not reply to any of the choral statements, pursuing her own train of thought,[41] is influenced by their more hopeful thoughts and has started considering faintly the possibility that Menelaus may still be alive (340ff), which prepares for Theonoe's positive answer.

In the part of the exchange till verse 359 Helen is completely occupied with Menelaus' fate, stating in her trochaic utterance (348ff) her determination to die (which she first expressed in 298, assuming it is genuine), if Theonoe confirms Teucer's report. In her second monodic utterance (362-85) she moves away from her immediate concern to a more general matter, the sufferings the Greeks and the Trojans endured because of her beauty.[42] The two distinct parts of the monody are marked by different subject (suffering of the opponents, beauty as curse) and metrical pattern (iambo-trochaic, dactylic). The change in metre may also be associated with the removal of the chorus, although the question when they start moving out of the orchestra cannot be answered with certainty.[43] In any case the dactyls in 375ff echo the dactylic prelude (164-66), thus closing the sequence of the two kommoi with the same metre as it opened, a symmetrical pattern reinforced by the entry and exit of the chorus.

In the first part of the monody the suffering caused because of Helen is summarized in the symmetrical phrasing of 365 and the cumulative expression of 366, defined further in the description of the mourning of the women of both sides: the Trojan sisters have cut their hair as an expression of

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[41]Regarding verses 330-47, which are pure iambic, Kannicht (1969, II. 104-5) remarks that the metrical pattern of Helen's utterances (mostly iambic dimeter-lecythion) in comparison to that of the chorus (lecythion-iambic dimeter) reflects in metrical terms their antithetical statements.

[42]Similarly, in the parodos she turned to the causes of the war (epode) after the narration of her recent miseries (second strophe).

[43]Dale (1967, on 362-85) suggests that they should have entered the palace by 374 while Kannicht (1969, II. 121) believes that their exit takes place during the dactylic part. Exit of the chorus and ἐπιπάροδος rarely happen in tragedy (this is also the case in *Eum.*, *Aj.*, *Alc.*, *Rhes.*). Here this device serves so that Menelaus' appearance on an empty performance area and the delivery of a monologue by him (386ff) function as a new beginning in the play.

sorrow for the death of their brothers (368-69) while the Greek women (370 Ἑλλάς personified)[44] utter loud cries while performing ritual gestures (370-74). Regarding the theme of beauty treated in the second part of the monody, Helen repeatedly insists that it is a curse (cf. 27, 236-37, 261, 304-5, 384-85) and wishes she could wipe it from her appearance (262ff). Here she refers to two mythological examples of women who were transformed by the gods into animals because of their beauty,[45] Callisto into a bear or a lioness (verse 379 is puzzling), Merops' daughter into a hind.

The similarity between their fate and Helen's[46] is that in all three cases beauty is proved disastrous, but whereas for the two mythical figures only for themselves, in the case of Helen for numerous people as well (383 τὸ δ' ἐμὸν δέμας makes the contrast emphatic). Another difference between the two cases is that, whereas the two mythical figures forgot their sorrows with their transformation (cf. Helen's apostrophe to Callisto as μάκαρ in 375), Helen remains beautiful but deeply unhappy; for her there is no possibility of metamorphosis, and thus of forgetfulness of her miseries. Therefore the seeming similarity between her fate and theirs serves simply to emphasize that the extent of her suffering is unique.

Helen's lamentation is more extensive than that of the heroines in the parodoi of *I.T.* or the two *El.* plays, and is also differentiated from it in that it does not concern only her personal misfortunes but a more general disaster, the destruction of Troy and the deaths of thousands of people. Because her lamentation has a wider scope it affects the rest of the play in a way it does not in the above mentioned parodoi-amoibaia. In *I.T.*, for example, the play with which *Hel.* has the greatest similarity, the happy outcome foreshadows the lamentation of the parodos. This is not so in *Hel.* Obviously the long separated couple is re-united and they escape successfully, but the suffering

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[44]Kannicht (1969, II. on 367-74) argues that the reference is to the Greek wives, so there is a division of roles between them and the Trojan sisters. For a similar distribution of manifestations of grief between two parts cf. *Hec.* 650-56.

[45]This quality is indicated in the name of the first, Καλλιστοῖ (376), and the phrase καλλοσύνας ἕνεκεν (383) for the second.

[46]Dale (1967) accepts in 377 the reading ματρὸς ἐμᾶς, arguing (on 375-85) that Callisto is compared with Leda as a lover of Zeus (cf. also Oehler 1925, 98). However, Kannicht (1969, II. on 377) rightly argues that this resemblance is irrelevant to the theme of disastrous beauty (thus he puts this phrase among *cruces*). The reading Diggle (1994a) proposes, κηρὸς instead of μητρός, is a possible emendation.

and the countless deaths of the Trojan war cannot be forgotten. On the contrary, the gloomy, lamenting atmosphere of the first four hundred lines of the play is taken up in the first stasimon where the chorus, instead of wishing success for the escape-plan or singing a joyful ode, lament for the woes of the Greeks and the Trojans. Finally Helen is inseparable from the bitter story of Troy and, although in this version of the myth she is a modest, faithful wife, at the end of the play she resumes her traditional role of causing death and disaster with the slaughter of the Egyptians.

CONCLUSIONS

Characteristic of the three Aeschylean kommoi I have analyzed in detail is that they are pieces of considerable length, which allows a certain degree of dramatic progression to take place within them, especially in the cases of *Pers*. and *Cho*. In *Pers*. Xerxes, who is responsible for the disaster, appears only within the context of the final kommos to perform a ritual lament with the Persian elders, while the conflict that takes place between them in its first part is the only one in the play. On the other hand, the kommos of *Cho*., although reacting to the catastrophe of the previous play, serves mainly to motivate the action that follows. In both kommoi the role of the chorus is prominent (in *Sept*. the lament is exclusively choral, as I have argued). In *Pers*. they criticize Xerxes but later respond to his commands as *exarchos* (thus the movement is from conflict between them to complete unanimity) while in *Cho*. they exhort Orestes and Electra towards vengeance (thus unanimity in their aims, and towards the end of the kommos in their voices as well). In all three plays the scenes preceding the kommoi lead up to them in a powerful climax. The kommos of *Cho*. also looks forward, initiating action and foreseeing the tone on which the play ends. The more or less uniform pattern of these three kommoi is absent from the epirrhematic ones, which are much shorter and have a lesser dramatic significance, reflecting the different attitudes of the participants, which range from enmity/open conflict between them (*Ag*. 1448ff, *Eum*. 778ff) to lack of understanding (*Ag*. 1072ff) or different emotional state (*Pers*. 256ff).

The Sophoclean kommoi present a greater uniformity than the Aeschylean ones. As I have repeatedly stressed, the ritual element characterizing the latter is lacking in them, while their usual pattern is that the chorus do not join the actor in his mourning. Instead, they try to advise him in practical matters or avert a possible disaster, while he refuses to listen, insisting on his beliefs. The chorus unite their voice with that of the actor only in the two kommoi with Tecmessa in *Aj*., as they share in her grief for their leader, and accidentally in a couple of other cases, namely, the third strophe of *El*. 121ff and their last utterance in *El*. 823ff. Otherwise they avert rather than exhort towards lamentation, thus we are far from the pattern of the Aeschylean kommoi of *Pers*., *Sept*. or *Cho*. The fact that the ritual element, so prominent in the Sophoclean tragedies in general, is conspicuously absent

from the Sophoclean kommoi is readily to be accounted for by this specific relationship between actor - chorus, since the latter do not help the former perform a ritual lament. So, for example, Electra in S. *El.* describes her mourning gestures in her monody preceding the parodos (86ff), but after the entrance of the chorus the exchange between them develops in an agonistic spirit, which would normally preclude any ritual manifestations of grief. In their repeated exhortations to the actor to restrain his emotions/reactions, the Sophoclean choruses seem to take into account the restrictions imposed by the Solonian legislation and Pericles' advice in his funeral oration for restraint. On the other hand, the individual with his excessive and unrestrained behaviour becomes differentiated from the group, so that it conspicuously stands out from it and dominates it. In fact, a characteristic of the Sophoclean kommoi is the prevalence of the actors, not only in terms of the larger parts they deliver, which is certainly obvious in the epirrhematic kommoi where the part of the chorus is confined to some iambic lines, but also in the sense that they impose their personality on the chorus by being unaffected by their advice. The isolation of the Sophoclean hero, then, becomes more emphatic in the context of a kommos since it is now, at the time of his great suffering, that the individual would especially need - and would, within the traditions of consoling, antiphonal lament, be expected to receive - the support of the group of people surrounding him.

The relationship between the chorus and the actors in the Aeschylean and Sophoclean kommoi reflects in a way the relationship between them in the plays of each dramatist in general, more conspicuously so in the Sophoclean plays where the individual holds an eminent position. By contrast, the variable relationship between the chorus and the actor in the Euripidean kommoi, which may be partly justified by their greater number in comparison to those of Aeschylus and Sophocles, may also indicate that this aspect, like others, of Euripides' dramatic technique does not so easily fall into more or less specific patterns, as does that of the other two tragedians. The ritual content of the Aeschylean kommoi, abandoned by Sophocles, is renewed by Euripides, which is in accordance with his reinstatement of more archaic features of style and structure in his plays.[1] Although, however, the Euripidean kommoi retain the ritual character of the Aeschylean ones (I have already pointed to the Aeschylean reminiscences of *Supp.* 798ff, 1123ff, *Tro.* 1287ff),[2] they are much shorter and, consequently, do not have such a strong

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[1]For a general study on this subject see Aélion (1983).

[2]On this theme see also Aélion (1983, 138-47).

dramatic quality. So, for example, the exodos of *Tro.*, although it constitutes a powerful climax to the play like the exodos of *Pers.*, is shorter than the Aeschylean kommos, which, reasonably, does not allow for the same degree of dramatic progression to take place in it. On the other hand, we also find in the Euripidean kommoi the usual pattern of the Sophoclean ones, where the actor alone mourns while the chorus keeps its distance either by disapproving of his attitude or attempting to console him (e.g. *Alc.* 861ff, *Med.* 131ff, *Hipp.* 811ff, *El.* 167ff, 1177ff). However, even in this case the conflict between characters is not so strong as in the Sophoclean kommoi. For example, the parodos of the Euripidean *El.* cannot be compared with that of the Sophoclean play either in its length or in the conflict between Electra's determination to continue mourning and the chorus' opposition to it. Perhaps this difference between on the one hand the Euripidean and on the other the Aeschylean and Sophoclean kommoi can be justified by the general tendency towards greater numbers of them as well as of other threnetic passages in Euripides' plays in comparison to those of the other two tragedians, since in this case the length and pathos of a single piece can arguably be more evenly distributed through the play.

In any case, despite the differences in the way the three tragedians treat their kommoi and the various attitudes of the chorus towards the actor exhibited in them, they are an essential part of the plays of all three dramatists, one of their substantial and clearly defined structures, absolutely recognizable and expected. The announcement of a death or another disaster requires an expression of grief, so a kommos is expected to follow it (in fact, in some cases it is fused with the messenger report). Similarly, the appearance of a suffering figure is a clear indication that he will be involved in an exchange with the chorus mourning for his predicament, while, likewise, the bringing forward of a dead body/bodies is expected to be accompanied by antiphonal exchanges of grief. On the other hand, the recurrent features of kommoi in the various aspects I have examined, e.g. metre, language, style, themes, in association to one another would certainly signal the kommos as a distinctive structure. As regards the metrical pattern, for example, I have shown that specific metres were used on certain occasions, which could arguably lead to the suggestion that the type of music accompanying each one of them was also distinctive. Likewise, the many self-references to lamentation, with the employment of an impressive variety of relevant terms, usually delivered within a kommos but frequently also pointing to it before

its beginning or looking backwards after its end, suggest that the performance of the kommos is an important part of the shared dramatic experience.[3]

Especially important is the positioning of kommoi in a play, as I have discussed in pp. 67ff, in the different functions they can perform as offering closure or a semblance of closure, preparing for later events or marking the two distinct parts of a play. As I have suggested while discussing the exodoi of *Pers.*, *Sept.* and *Tro.*, kommoi concluding a play have the function of ritual closure, as they rehabilitate the previous disorder. So the accusations heard against Xerxes throughout *Pers.* and the conflict between him and the chorus in the first part of the kommos are subsumed in its second part in the unanimous lament for Persia. Similarly, the ritual lament at the end of *Tro.* is the only counterbalance the Trojan women can oppose to the repeated distortions of ritual throughout the play and the atmosphere of complete desolation and annihilation with which the play concludes.[4] The function of kommos as closure is especially important since it constitutes the last impression of the audience, in the cases of *Pers.* and *Tro.* that of an open ending of continuing lamentation and suffering, in *Sept.* the restoration of the equality of the brothers and thus of final justice. In all the cases where a kommos functions as closure it is the climactic scene of the play, the movement towards which all the previous scenes lead. Some kommoi at the end of a play seem to have a similar emotional/ritual closure, but they are interrupted by further action, as, for example, Creon's lament for Haemon in *Ant.* by the announcement of Eurydice's death, after which it is compounded, or Antigone's and Ismene's for Oedipus in *O.C.* by the appearance of Theseus, who points to the inappropriateness of lamentation.

Equally important to the function of kommoi as closure is that of kommoi coming early in a play so that they create a certain emotional atmosphere preparing in one or another way for the action that follows. I have discussed in detail how the great kommos of *Cho.* foreshadows the subsequent action. Likewise in other similar cases, for example, the development of Ajax's thought in *Aj.* 348ff from the point of pitying himself and asking to be killed to a clearer understanding of his position and his implicit decision to kill himself is clarified further in his iambic speech (430ff) and prepares clearly for his suicide, the climactic scene of the play. Similarly,

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[3]Self-referentiality extends to other rituals as well such as prayer and supplication. For choral self-referentiality in particular see Henrichs (1994-95).

[4]On the power of ritual song in *Tro.* see Easterling (1993, 19-20).

Electra's insistence on mourning, emphasized in the parodos of S. *El.*, justifies her actions later in the play and her decision to kill Aegisthus herself.

The structural significance of kommoi is especially noticeable when they mark two distinct parts of a play, as in the cases of *Aj.* and *Ant.* In the former the kommos coming after the epiparodos mirrors the one following the parodos, as they are delivered by the same participants, in circumstances which reflect one another and share similar themes (see pp. 203-4). Similarly, the kommoi of Antigone and Creon in *Ant.* parallel their fortunes symmetrically at the end of each half of the play. The widespread use of kommoi in tragedy and their significant structural functions show that they were a predictable and signalled component, in a way conventional pieces like the messenger ῥῆσις with which they are frequently associated. No doubt the spectators expected to find them in one or another part of the play, and they certainly enjoyed such expressions of grief (as Dionysus in *Frogs* 1028-29 confirms).

The frequency of kommoi in tragedy, and especially their prominence in the Aeschylean plays, led scholars, particularly in the early twentieth century, to the hypothesis that threnos was indeed the basis of tragedy. Such views found their justification in the remarkable length, ritual content[5] and dramatic significance of the three Aeschylean kommoi I have analyzed in detail. Before Aeschylus, Phrynichus also seems to have exploited the threnetic element in his *Capture of Miletus* and *Phoenician Women*.[6] So some scholars sought the origins of tragedy in the cult of the dead heroes at their tombs, an indispensable part of which was the threnos in their honour, leaving aside the questions about its possible Dionysiac origins and its association with Dionysus.[7] Such theories were based especially on the prominence of grave ritual and funerary rites in early tragedy (namely, *Pers.* and *Cho.*, where the tombs of Darius and Agamemnon become the centre of a

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[5]Else (1977), stressing the prominence of threnos in Aeschylean tragedy, shows that it is the most clearly marked of all its ritual features.

[6]As Else (1965, 75) argues, this is in accordance with the tradition that he invented female roles and female choruses, since women are traditionally more given to lamentation than men.

[7]Cf. the ancient proverb οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον. As Segal (1982, 16) remarks, "Dionysus' role in the origins of drama is one of the most controversial questions in the history of Greek literature". I will not get involved in this discussion; I refer, indicatively, only to Friedrich (1996) and the response to him by Seaford (1996) as well as Seaford (1981).

large part of the action),[8] which also continues in later tragedies, combined with other related matters such as concern for burial and the effect the spirits of the dead have on human affairs (e.g. *Aj.*, *Ant.*, *O.C.*, *Hec.*, *Hel.*).[9] On the other hand, one could argue that the prominence and frequency of kommoi in tragedy are justified by the fact that it deals with stories concerning death, an important event in the life of the community, which, reasonably, receives extensive treatment in a genre which is predisposed to find in the representation of death-ritual and lamentation a rich vein of verbal and dramatic opportunity.

The great number of kommoi in tragedy needs to be seen in relation to the impressive accumulation of other lamenting passages in it, to the extent that some plays consist almost entirely of a series of threnoi of different types. This is true, for example, of *Pers.*, *Cho.*, *P.V.*, *Aj.*, S. *El.*, *Hipp.*, *Hec.*, E. *Supp.*, *Herc.*, *Tro.* and *Pho.* The effect is especially remarkable in the Euripidean plays, with the introduction of threnetic amoibaia between actors and monodies (both of which are rare in the other two tragedians), which shows that Euripides exploits in various innovative forms the threnetic element traditional in tragedy for the creation of pathos.

As I have discussed *passim*, the various types of laments reasonably perform different functions: for example, the kommos depicts the variety of relationships between actor - chorus; the choral ode usually constitutes of generalized statements, as the chorus are in most cases distanced from the suffering of the actor; the monody is appropriate for the expression of individual suffering; the monologue allows for extensive addresses to the dead. Laments are distributed in a play in such a way as to suit better a given occasion and to express different degrees of emotional intensity. So, for example, the revelation of Oedipus' identity in *O.T.* is followed by a choral lament (1186ff) prompted by the specific case of Oedipus but extended to universalizing thoughts, whereas the kommos is reserved for the climactic scene of the play, the appearance of the blinded Oedipus, which puts his catastrophe into visual terms. The kommos in S. *El.* 823ff shows Electra's indignation at the attempt of the chorus to console her now that she is at the lowest of her fortunes while her monologue over Orestes' supposed funerary urn (1126ff) is an extremely touching scene, as she addresses it almost

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[8]For the importance of tomb as a scenic feature in Aeschylean tragedy and to a smaller extent in the Euripidean one see Arnott (1962, 57ff), who remarks in addition that there is no use of a tomb in the extant plays of Sophocles, who was generally sparing in his use of scenic effects.

[9]For a brief discussion of the most prominent of these theories see Appendix IX.

exclusively while mourning for his and her own predicament. Tragedy, in the variety of structures it can accomodate, employs different forms of lamenting expressions to suit different situations, thus moving away from the more or less fixed pattern of the Homeric and lyric laments.

APPENDIX I: KOMMOI

Passages	Participants	Structure	Metre	Occasion
Aeschylus				
Pers. 256-289	chor. (m)[1] - messenger	stroph. (3 p.), epirrh. (two-trim. sections by the messenger)	mostly iambic with a mixture of other metres, especially choriambs	Persian defeat at Salamis (report)
Pers. 908-1077	Xerxes - coryph./chor.	908-930: recitative anapaests leading to transitional ones 931-1077: stroph. (7 p. + epode), lyric	931-1001: anapaests dominant in the 1st p., combined with several other metres in the 2nd and 3rd p. 1002-77: predominantly iambic with combination of other metres	Persian defeat at Salamis
Sept. 875-1004	two semi-chor./two members of the chor.	stroph., lyric 875-960: 4 p. 961-1004: prelude + 1 p. with ephymn. + epode	iambic throughout with frequent occurrence of other metres in 875-960	Mutual killing of Eteocles and Polyneices (*prothesis*-scene)
Ag. 1072-1177	Cassandra (m) - coryph./chor.	stroph. (7 p.) 1072-1113: epirrh. (two-trim. sections by the coryph.) 1114-1177: lyric	iambic with an increasing occurrence of dochmiacs, which finally dominate the exchange	Cassandra's visions about Agamemnon's and her own impending doom
Ag. 1448-1576	chor. (m) - Clytemnestra	stroph. (3 p. with 3 ephymn.) epirrh. (anapaest. sections by Clytemn.)	1st, 2nd p.: after a dochm. & dactyl. opening respectively a combination mainly of choriambic and iambic cola follows - 3rd p.: wholly iambic - all three ephymn. begin with anap. concluding with various cola	Agamemnon's murder (corpse present)
Cho. 306-478	coryph./chor. - Orestes - Electra	stroph. (10 p.) 306-422: epirrh. (anap. sections by the coryph.) 423-78: lyric concluding with 3 anap. verses	306-422: predominantly aeolo-choriambic combined with other metres, with particular dominance of iamb. in the last p. 423-65: exclusively iambic 466-75: aeolo-choriambic	Agamemnon's murder which happened a long time ago

[1] (m) next to one participant indicates that he is the chief mourner. The lack of such indication means that both participants share the same grief.

Cho. 869-874	Aegisthus (inside, m) - chor./coryph.	astroph., epirrh. (trim. by the coryph.)	dochm. + cretics	Aegisthus being killed (death-scene)
Cho. 973-1043	Orestes - chor. (m)	astroph., epirrh. (iambic sections by Orestes)	lyric anap. (see p. 39, n. 16)	Clytemnestra's murder (corpse present)
Eum. 778-891	chor. (m) - Athena	stroph. (2 p.), epirrh. (iambic sections by Athena)	1st p.: mainly iambic + dochmiacs 2nd p.: exclusively dochmiac	The Erinyes' deprivation of their honours
P.V. 128-192 (parodos)	chor. - Prometheus	stroph. (2 p.), epirrh. (anap. sections by Prometheus)	mainly iambic with some choriambs in the 1st p. and dactyls in the 2nd.	Prometheus' suffering by Zeus
Sophocles				
Aj. 201-262	Tecmessa - coryph./chor.	201-220, 257-262: astr., anap. 221-256: stroph. (1 p. + an anap. section in between), lyric	combination of iambics, dactyls, choriambs	Ajax's madness (report)
Aj. 348-429	Ajax (m) - coryph. - Tecmessa	stroph. (3 p.), epirrh. (one and two-trim. sections by Tecm. and the coryph.)	mainly iambo-dochmiac with some choriambs in the 1st and 2nd p.	Ajax's madness
Aj. 879-973	chor./coryph. - Tecmessa	stroph. (2 p.), epirrh. (trim. by coryph. and Tecmessa)	combination of dochmiacs, dactyls, iambics	Ajax's suicide (report, corpse present)
El. 121-250 (parodos)	chor. - Electra (m)	stroph. (3 p. + epode), lyric	1st p.: mainly choriambic, dactylic - 2nd p.: iambic, dactylic - 3rd p.: predominantly anap. with iambics at the end - epode: combin. of anap., dact., dochm., iamb.	Agamemnon's murder which happened a long time ago
El. 823-870 (in place of a stasimon)	chor. (see p. 70, n. 1) - Electra (m)	stroph. (2 p.), lyric	1st p.: ionic 2nd p.: combination of anap., doch., iambo-chor.	Orestes' supposed death
El. 1398-1421 (strophe of a one-pair amoibaion)	Electra - coryph./chor. - Clytemnestra (inside, m)	epirrh. (trim. by Electra, coryph., Clyt.)	mostly iambic	Clytemnestra being killed (death-scene)
O.T. 1307-1368	Oedipus (m) - coryph./ chor.	1307-12: lyric anap. + 1 iamb. trim. 1313-68: stroph. (2 p.), epirrh. (two-trim. sections by the coryph.)	iambo-dochmiac	Oedipus' self-blinding

Ant. 806-882	Antigone (m) - coryph./ chor.	stroph. (2 p. + epode) 806-38: epirrh. (most probably recitat. anap. by the coryph.: see p. 218, n. 16) 839-82: lyric	1st p.: choriamb. - 2nd p.: iambo-chor. with some dochm. - epode: combination mainly of iambics, trochaics, choriambs	Antigone's imminent death
Ant. 1261-1347	Creon (m) - coryph. - messenger	stroph.,[2] epirrh. (trim. by the coryph., the mess., Creon)	exclusively dochm. + two trim. in the 1st p.	Suicides of Haemon and Eurydice (the latter reported within the kommos, corpses present)
Phil. 1081-1217 (in place of a stasimon)	Philoctetes (m) - chor.	stroph. (2 p. + epode), lyric	mainly aeolo-choriambic with an admixture of dactyls and iambics	Philoctetes' deprivation of his weapons
O.C. 510-548	chor. - Oedipus (m)	stroph. (2 p.), lyric	1st p.: mainly aeolo-choriamb., 2nd p.: iambic	Oedipus' unwilling crimes
O.C. 1670-1750	Antigone - Ismene (both m) - chor.	stroph. (2 p.), lyric	1st p.: iambic throughout combined with dactyls, trochaics and choriambs 2nd p.: iambo-trochaic	Oedipus' supernatural death
Euripides				
Alc. 861-934 (epiparodos)	Admetus (m) - chor. (probably coryph. in the 1st p.: see p. 56, n. 12)	stroph. (2 p.), epirrh. (anapaest. sections by Admetus)	1st p.: iambo-dochm. 2nd p.: iamb. + enoplian cola	Alcestis' recent death
Med. 131-213 (parodos)	chor. - nurse - Medea (inside, m)	epirrh. (anap. sections by the nurse), 2 astr. lyrics by the chor. at the begin. and end (131-38, 205-13) with a str. p. in between (148-59=173-83)	1st lyric: mainly anap., dactyl. - stroph. p.: a mixture mainly of anap. & choriambic-enoplian cola - 2nd lyric: a mixture mainly of iamb. & dactyl. cola - lyric anap. by Medea throughout	Medea's betrayal by Jason
Med. 1270a-1281 (2nd p. of a choral ode)	children (inside, m) - chor.	epirrh. (trim. by the children)	dochmiacs (last line: iambo-dochm.)	Medea's children being killed (death-scene)
Hipp. 565-600	coryph./chor. (see p. 55, n. 10) - Phaedra	astr., epirrh. (trim. by Phaedra throughout and by the coryph. at the begin. and end)	exclusively dochmiac	Revelation of Phaedra's secret to Hippolytus (report)

[2]The number of pairs is disputed (from 2-4): see Dale (1983, 32-33), Pohlsander (1964, 43ff), Jebb (1900, on 1261-1347) respectively.

Hipp. 811-855	chor./coryph. (see p. 55, n. 10) - Theseus	2 astr. lyrics by the chor. at the begin. and end (811-16, 852-55) with a str. p. by Theseus in between (817-51), which is interrupted by two trim. from the coryph.	chor. lyrics: dochmiacs + one iamb. trim. Thes.: combination of dochm. and iamb. trim.	Phaedra's suicide (corpse present)
Hipp. 856-886	Theseus - chor./ coryph.	astr., epirrh. (trim. by Theseus and the coryph.)	mostly dochmiac with some iambics	Discovery by Theseus of the content of Phaedra's tablet
Andr. 1173-1225	Peleus - coryph./chor.	str. (2 p.) 1173-1196: epirrh. (two trim. by the coryph.) - 1197-1225: lyric	1st p.: mostly dactyl. tetrameters 2nd p.: iambic throughout	Neoptolemus' murder (*prothesis*-scene)
Hec. 681-722	Hecuba (m) - coryph. - nurse	astr., epirrh. (trim. by the coryph. and the nurse)	mostly dochmiac with some iambics (including trim.)	Polydorus' killing (report, corpse present)
Hec. 1056-1108	Polymestor (m) - coryph.	astr., epirrh. (two-trim. sections by the coryph.)	1st utter.: combination of dochm. and anap. - 2nd utter.: dochm. and iamb. combined with some other cola	Polymestor's blindness and killing of his children by the Trojan women
Supp. 798-837	Adrastus - chor.	str. (1 p. + epode), lyric	iambic throughout apart from some dochmiacs and a dactylic hexameter	Death of the seven Argive leaders (*prothesis*-scene)
Supp. 1072-1079	chor. - Iphis	astr., epirrh. (two trim. by Iphis)	dochmiac	Evadne's suicide
Supp. 1123-1164	chor. of sons - chor. of mothers	str. (3 p.), lyric	exclusively iambic	Death of the seven Argive leaders (funerary urns)
El. 167-212 (parodos)	chor. - Electra (m)	str. (1 p.), lyric	aeolo-choriambic	Agamemnon's murder which happened a long time ago
El. 1165-1171	Clytemnestra (inside, m) - coryph./chor.	astr., epirrh. (trim. by Clyt. and the coryph.)[3]	iambo-dochmiac	Clytemnestra being killed (death-scene)
El. 1177-1232	Orestes - Electra (both m) - chor. (in the 3rd p. only Or., El.)	str. (3 p.), lyric	iambic throughout with an alcaic 10syllable at the end	Clytemnestra's murder (corpse present)
Herc. 749-762 (1st antistrophe of a chor. ode)	Lycus (inside, m) - chor./coryph.	epirrh. (trimeters by Lycus and the coryph.)	iambo-dochmiac	Lycus being killed (death-scene)

[3]Cropp (1988, on 1147-1171) suggests that the coryphaeus may speak 1166 (strangely, since it is an iambic dimeter) and possibly 1168.

Herc. 886-909	Amphitryon (inside, m) - chor.	astr., lyric	a mixture of dochmiacs, iambics and prosodiac-enoplian cola, with occasional dactyls and trochaics	Heracles' children being killed (similar to death-scene)
Herc. 910-921	messenger - chor. (m)	astr., epirrh. (one trim. by the mess.)	mostly dochmiac with iambics	Murder of Heracles' children (report)
Herc. 1042-1088	Amphitryon - chor./ coryph.	astr. lyrics concluding with an iamb. couplet by the coryph.	a mixture of dochm. and iamb., with occasional reiziana, enoplia and hemiepe	Murder of Heracles' children (corpses present as well as the sleeping Heracles)
Tro. 153-196 (parodos)	two semi-chor. - Hecuba	str. (1 p.), lyric	exclusively anapaestic	Imminent carrying of the Trojan women to Greece as slaves
Tro. 1209-1255	Hecuba - chor.	astr., epirrh. (iambic sections by Hecuba, anap. from the coryph. in 1251ff)	iambo-dochmiac	Astyanax's killing (*prothesis*-scene)
Tro. 1287-1332	Hecuba - chor.	str. (2 p.), lyric	exclusively iambic	Total destruction of Troy by the fire
I.T. 123-235 (parodos)	Iphigeneia (m) - chor.	astr., lyric	anapaestic	Orestes' supposed death
I.T. 644-656	chor. (m) - Orestes - Pylades	astr., epirrh. (trim. by Orestes and Pylades)	dochmiac	Orestes' imminent death and Pylades' salvation
Ion 763-799	Creousa (m) - old man - coryph.	astr., epirrh. (trim. by the old man and the coryph.)	dochmiac	Creousa's childlessness (report)
Hel. 164-252 (parodos)	Helen (m) - chor.	str. (prelude + 2 p. + epode), lyric	trochaic with occasional iambic cola apart from the prelude which is dactylic	Menelaus' supposed death and other recent misfortunes
Hel. 330-385 (in place of a stas.)	Helen (m) - chor.	astr., lyric	330-47: iambic - 348-59: trochaic with a dactylic hexameter - 360-74: mixture of trochaics and iambics - 375-85: dactylic	Menelaus' supposed death and other recent misfortunes
Pho. 1335-1353	messenger - Creon (m) - coryph./chor. (m)	astr., epirrh. (troch. tetram. and then iamb. trim. by the mess., the coryph. and Creon)	iambo-dochmiac	Mutual killing of Eteocles and Polyneices and Jocasta's suicide (report)
Or. 140-207 (parodos)	chor. - Electra (m)	str. (2 p.), lyric	1st p.: exclusively dochmiac 2nd p.: iambo-dochmiac with enoplian sequences	Orestes' sickness

Or. 1296-1310	Helen (inside, m) - Electra - chor.	astr., epirrh. (trim. by Helen, Electra)[4]	a mixture of dactyls and dochmiacs	Helen being killed (death-scene)
Rhes. 728-755	Rhesus' charioteer (m) - coryph.	astr., epirrh. (trim. by the coryph.)	lyric anapaests (see p. 39, n. 16)	Rhesus' killing (report) - suffering of the charioteer from his wound
Rhes. 895-914	Muse (m) - coryph.	str. (1 p.), epirrh. (two trim. by the coryph.)	mainly enoplia with two dactylic tetrameters and an ithyphallic	Rhesus' killing (*prothesis*-scene)

[4] According to Diggle (1994a) who gives 1297-98 to Electra.

APPENDIX II: CHORAL ODES

Passages	Structure	Metre	Occasion
Aeschylus			
Pers. 548-597 (A Stas.)	3 str. p.	1st p.: predominantly iambic - 2nd & 3rd p.: predominantly dactylic	Persian defeat at Salamis
Pers. 852-907 (Γ Stas.)	3 str. p. + epode	dactylic	Lost Persian territories
Sept. 832-847 (Γ Stas.)	1 str. p.	iambic	Mutual killing of Eteocles and Polyneices
Supp. 58-76, 113-132 (parts of the parodos: 2nd p. & 3rd str., 6th p. + ephymn. respectively)		2nd p.: predominantly choriambic - 3rd str.: iambic, dactylic - 6th p.: iambic - ephymn.: iambo-dochmiac, aeolic	Pursuit of the Danaids by their cousins
Cho. 22-83 (parodos)	2 str. p. + epode	iambic	The chorus sent with libations to Agamemnon's tomb
Cho. 152-163 (astr. ode)		predominantly dochmiac with some iambics and trochaics	Prayer for vengeance at Agamemnon's tomb
Eum. 143-154 (1st p. of the first parodos)		combination of iambics and dochmiacs	Orestes' escape from the Erinyes
P.V. 397-435 (A Stas.)	probably 3 str. p. or 2 p. + epode[5]	1st p.: iambo-choriambic - 2nd p.: trochaic, aeolic - 3rd p.: iambic, dactylic	Prometheus' suffering by Zeus
P.V. 687-695 (astr. ode)		mainly iambic	Io's suffering by Hera
Sophocles			
Aj. 596-645 (A Stas.)	2 str. p.	mainly aeolic with some iambics	Ajax's madness
Aj. 1185-1222 (Γ Stas.)	2 str. p.	aeolo-choriambic	The long-lasting hardships of the chorus on the battle-field away from their homeland
O.T. 1186-1222 (Δ Stas.)	2 str. p.	1st p.: aeolic - 2nd p.: combination of iambics, hypodochmiacs and choriambs	Revelation of Oedipus' unwilling crimes
Trach. 947-970 (Δ Stas.)	2 str. p.	largely iambic with some choriambs	Heracles' physical suffering (the procession bringing him suits a funerary one)
Euripides			

[5] 425-30 are problematic. For a detailed discussion of them see Griffith (1983, on 425-30).

Alc. 77-131 (parodos)	prelude (77-85) + 2 str. p., the stanzas of the 1st one followed by astr. sections (93-97, 105-11)	77-85, 93-97, 105-11: anap. - 1st p.: iambics with prosodiac-enoplian cola - 2nd p.: a mixture of iambics, hemiepe and aeolo-choriambic cola	The chorus wonder whether Alcestis is already dead
Alc. 213-237 (A Stas.)[6]	2 str. p.	mainly iambic with a combination of dochmiac, aeolic and enoplian cola	Alcestis' imminent death
Hipp. 362-372 (it corresponds metrically to Phaedra's monody in 669-679)[7]		mainly dochmiac with two iamb. trimeters	Phaedra's revelation of her secret
Hipp. 1102-1150[8]	2 str. p. + epode	combination of iambics and dactyls	Injustice of Hippolytus' exile
Hec. 444-483 (A Stas.)	2 str. p.	aeolic	The chorus' anxiety about where they will be carried as slaves
Hec. 629-656 (B Stas.)	1 str. p. + epode	combination mainly of aeolic and iambic metres, with some dactylic cola in the epode	Fall of Troy
Hec. 905-952 (Γ Stas.)	2 str. p. + epode	chiefly dactylo-epitrite	Fall of Troy
Supp. 42-86 (parodos)	3 str. p.	1st & 2nd p.: ionic - 3rd p.: iambo-trochaic	Effort of the mothers to recover the bodies of their dead sons (supplication scene)
Supp. 778-793 (Γ Stas.)	1 str. p.	iambic	Reaction of the mothers to the recovery of the bodies of their sons
Supp. 918-924 (astr. ode)		iambic	Childlessness of the mothers in their old age (bodies of the dead present)
Supp. 955-979 (Δ Stas.)	1 str. p. + epode	aeolic	Childlessness of the mothers in their old age
Herc. 107-137 (parodos)	1 str. p. + epode	str. p.: iambic - epode: trochaic	The difficult position of Amphitryon, Megara and Heracles' children as suppliants
Herc. 348-441 (Λ Stas.)	3 str. p. with a different mesode and epode each	aeolic throughout	Encomium of the labours of Heracles
Herc. 875-885 (astr. ode)		dochmiacs with a combination of iambic, choriambic and enoplian cola	Heracles' impending madness

[6]Dale (1954, on 213-37) hesitates to call it a regular stasimon since "in matter and manner" it does not behave like that.
[7]Since this is the case, Barrett (1964, on 362-72) finds it likely that it was sung not by the whole chorus but by its leader.
[8]For the disputed question whether all the stanzas of this lyric piece should be attributed to the main chorus (in that case it forms a regular stasimon, the third of the play) or the first and second strophes to a secondary chorus of men see Barrett (1964, 366-69).

Herc. 1016-1038 (astr. ode)		predominantly dochmiac with some iambics and prosodiac-enoplian sequences	Heracles' killing of his children (bodies of the dead and the sleeping Heracles made visible from 1031ff)
Tro. 197-229 (part of the parodos)	1 str. p.	anapaestic	Places in Greece where the Trojan women are likely to be carried as slaves
Tro. 511-567 (A Stas.)	1 str. p. + epode	iambic with dactylic opening	Fall of Troy
Tro. 820-859 (2nd p. of the B stas.)		chiefly dactylo-epitrite with some iambics and trochaics	The gods' indifference to Troy's fate
Tro. 1060-1117 (Γ Stas.)	2 str. p.	1st p.: chiefly aeolic with some iambics - 2nd p.: iambic, dactylic	Reproach of Zeus for allowing the destruction of Troy - Separation of the chorus from their homeland
I.T. 1089-1152 (B Stas.)	2 str. p.	chiefly aeolic	Longing of the chorus for their homeland
Ion 1229-1243 (astr. ode)		aeolic with two ionic verses	Fear of the chorus that they will be put to death together with Creousa
Hel. 1107-1164 (A Stas.)	2 str. p.	1st p.: a mixture of iambic, enoplian and aeolic cola - 2nd p.: combination of iambics and dactyls	The woes caused to the Greeks and the Trojans by the phantom Helen
Pho. 1284-1307 (Δ Stas.)	1 str. p.	mainly iambo-dochmiac with two anap. verses at the beginning	Imminent duel and impending doom of Eteocles and Polyneices
Or. 316-347 (A Stas.)	1 str. p.	mainly dochmiac with some iambics	Prayer to the Erinyes to relieve Orestes from his madness
Or. 960-981 (Γ Stas.)[9]	1 str. p.	exclusively iambic	Impending killing of Orestes and Electra

[9] I argue in App. VIII that this is a kommos between Electra and the chorus.

APPENDIX III: MONODIES

Passages	Singer	Structure	Metre	Occasion
Sophocles				
S. *El.* 86-120	Electra	astr.	anapaestic[10]	Agamemnon's murder which happened a long time ago
Euripides				
Hipp. 669-679	Phaedra	(see the choral ode in *Hipp.* 362-372)	(see the choral ode in *Hipp.* 362-372)	Revelation by the nurse of Phaedra's secret to Hippolytus
Hipp. 1347-1388	Hippolytus	astr.	1347-69: recitat. anap. - 1370-78: lyric anap. - 1379-88: iambics with one anap. verse	Hippolytus' physical suffering
Andr. 103-116	Andromache	the only monody which cannot be classified as str./astr.[11]	elegiac distichs	Andromache's many misfortunes
El. 112-166	Electra	2 str. p. with a different mesode each	aeolo-choriambic with anap. opening in the 1st p. and dactylic in the 2nd.	Agamemnon's murder which happened a long time ago
Tro. 98-152	Hecuba	astr.	98-121: recitat. anap. - 122-152: lyric anap.	Hecuba's many misfortunes
Ion 859-922	Creousa	astr.	anapaestic with some dochmiacs interspersed	Creousa's revelation of her secret affair with Apollo and reproach against him for having let her son die
Pho. 301-354	Jocasta	astr.	chiefly iambo-dochmiac with some dactyls	Polyneices' return to Thebes[12]

[10]Scholars do not agree about the nature of Electra's anapaests, since they share characteristics of both the recitative and the lyric type (see p. 57). So Jebb (1894, on 86-120) prefers to see them as lyric while Kamerbeek (1974, on 86-120) suggests that they are recitative which borrow some features from the lyric type to show the intensity of Electra's emotions. Dale (1968, 52) and West (1982, 122) adopt the latter view as well.

[11]See p. 129, n. 7.

[12]Mixed feelings of joy and sorrow prevail. As Barner (1971, 286) remarks, this is the only clearly ambivalent monody.

Pho. 1485-1529	Antigone	astr.	dactylic till 1507, then greater elaboration with a mixture of aeolic, choriambic and ionic cola	Mutual killing of Eteocles and Polyneices and Jocasta's suicide (corpses present)
Or. 982-1012	Electra	astr.	mainly iambic, with some trochaics and a dactylic section near the end	The fall of the Pelopids
Or. 1381-1392, 1395-1399 (parts of the Phrygian's monody, 1369-1502)	the Phrygian slave	astr.	1st utterance: mainly dochmiac with some iambics - 2nd utterance: mainly anap.	Fall of Troy - Death of Helen
I.A. 1279-1335[13] (preceded by a brief lament. anap. utterance by Clytemnestra, 1276-78)	Iphigeneia	astr.	1279-82: recitat. anap. - 1283-1318: a mixture of dochmiacs, dactyls, trochaics and iambics - 1319-29: lyric anap. - 1330-32: dactylic - 1334-35: iambic	Iphigeneia's imminent death

[13]As with several parts (and even the whole) of the play, the authenticity of this monody is disputed. Diggle (1994a) suggests that it is probably not Euripidean.

APPENDIX IV: AMOIBAIA BETWEEN ACTORS

Passages	Participants	Structure	Metre	Occasion
Aeschylus				
P.V. 561-608	Io (m) - Prometheus	epirrh. 561-65: anap. 566-73: astr. lyrics 574-88=593-608: str. p. with four trimeters by Prometheus in between	astr. lyr.: iambo-troch. with dochmiacs str. p.: combination of dochmiacs and iambics	Io's suffering by Hera
Sophocles				
Trach. 971-1043	Hyllus (m) - old man - Heracles (m)	epirrh. 971-1003: astr., anap. 1004-17=1023-43: str. p.[14] with five hexameters between the stanzas	str. p.: largely dochmiac with two anap. verses and five hexameters	Heracles' suffering from the poisoned robe
Euripides				
Alc. 244-279	Alcestis - Admetus (m)	str. (2 p. + epode), epirrh. (two-trim. sections and an anap. section by Admetus)	combination of iamb., aeolo-choriamb. and enoplian cola	Alcestis' imminent death
Alc. 393-415	child (m) - Admetus	str. (1 p.), epirrh. (two trim. by Admetus between the stanzas)	chiefly dochmiac with some enoplia and iambics	Alcestis' death (*prothesis*-scene)
Med. 96-130	Medea (inside, m) - nurse	astr., epirrh. (anap. sections by the nurse)	lyric anap.	Medea's betrayal by Jason
Andr. 501-544	Andromache - child (both m) - Menelaus	str. (1 p.), epirrh. (anapaestic sections by Menelaus)	aeolic	Imminent death of Andromache and Molossus (supplication scene)
Andr. 825-865	Hermione (m) - nurse	epirrh. (trim. by the nurse) 825-39: str. (2 p.) - 841-65: astr.	dochmiacs	Hermione fears that Neoptolemus will kill her

[14]According to Easterling (1982, on 1004-43, 239). For a different strophic arrangement (3 p.) see Dale (1981, 35) and, similarly, Pearson (1924).

Hec. 154-215	Hecuba - Polyxena	str. (1 p., with an astr. dialogue between the stanzas), lyric	mainly anap. with some dactyls and iambics in the str. p. and occasional dochmiacs in the astr. lyr.	Polyxena's imminent death (report)
Tro. 235-291	Talthybius - Hecuba (m)	astr., epirrh. (trim. by Talthybius)	combination of dochm., iamb. and hemiepe	Fate of Cassandra, Polyxena, Andromache and Hecuba (report)
Tro. 577-607	Andromache - Hecuba	str. (3 p.), lyric	1st & 2nd p.: iambic - 3rd p.: dactylic	Fall of Troy and the consequent misfortunes of the two women
Pho. 1530-1581	Antigone - Oedipus	astr., lyric	1530-45: iambo-dochm. with dactyls and ionics - 1546-81: dactyls with an admixture of anap.	Mutual killing of Eteocles and Polyneices and Jocasta's suicide (report, corpses present)
Pho. 1710-1757	Antigone - Oedipus	astr., lyric	iambo-trochaic	Their exile from homeland

APPENDIX V: MONOLOGUES

Passages	Speaker	Occasion
Aeschylus		
Ag. 1256-1294	Cassandra	Her impending doom
Ag. 1322-1330	Cassandra	Her impending doom
Cho. 743-763	Cilissa	Orestes' supposed death
P.V. 88-127[15]	Prometheus	His suffering by Zeus
Sophocles		
Aj. 992-1039	Teucer	Ajax's death (corpse present)
El. 807-822	Electra	Orestes' supposed death
El. 1126-1170 (1160-62 are anap.)	Electra	Orestes' supposed death (funerary urn)
Trach. 1046-1111 (1081 forms a dochmiac, 1085-86 are anap.)	Heracles	His suffering from the poisoned robe
Phil. 782-805 (bacchiacs and cretics among the trim.)	Philoctetes	His suffering from his wound
Phil. 927-962	Philoctetes	His betrayal by Neoptolemus
Euripides		
Med. 1021-1039	Medea	Her imminent killing of her children
Heracl. 427-460	Iolaus	The difficult position he, Alcmena and Heracles' children are found as suppliants
Supp. 1080-1113	Iphis	Evadne's suicide
Herc. 1340-1393	Heracles	His killing of his children and wife (corpses present)
Tro. 466-510	Hecuba	Her many misfortunes

[15]This is a unique mixture of monologue and monody, starting with trimeters, continuing with anapaests (93-100), back to trimeters, then to lyric verses (114-19 are iambo-dochmiac) and finally to anapaests again (120-27).

Tro. 740-779	Andromache	Astyanax's imminent death
Tro. 790-798 (anapaestic)	Hecuba	Astyanax's imminent death
Tro. 1156-1206	Hecuba	Astyanax's killing (*prothesis*-scene)
Pho. 1595-1624	Oedipus	His past and present misfortunes
Bacch. 1302-1326	Cadmus	Pentheus' killing (*prothesis*-scene)
Bacch. 1329ff (text lost)	Agave	Pentheus' killing (*prothesis*-scene)
I.A. 442-468	Agamemnon	His difficult position at having to sacrifice Iphigeneia

APPENDIX VI: DIALOGUES

Passages	Participants	Occasion
Aeschylus		
Ag. 1343-1347	Agamemnon (inside, m) - coryph.	Agamemnon being killed (death-scene)
Sophocles		
Aj. 974-984	Teucer (m) - coryph.	Ajax's death (corpse present)
Phil. 730-761 (a bacchiac in 750, interjections *extra metrum* in 732, 739)	Philoctetes (m) - Neoptolemus	Philoctetes' physical suffering
O.C. 1432-1446	Polyneices - Antigone (m)	Polyneices' imminent doom
Euripides		
Med. 1361-1414 (trim. till 1388, the rest anapaestic)	Jason (m) - Medea	Medea's killing of her children (corpses present)
Hipp. 1407-1415	Hippolytus - Theseus	Hippolytus' imminent death
Hipp. 1444-1461	Hippolytus - Theseus	Hippolytus' imminent death
Hec. 409-440	Polyxena - Hecuba	Polyxena's imminent death
Hec. 1035-1038	Polymestor (inside, m) - coryph.	Polymestor being blinded
El. 1308-1341 (anapaestic)	Orestes - Electra (both m) - Castor	Orestes' and Electra's exile from their homeland and separation from each other
Herc. 1140-1152	Heracles - Amphitryon	Heracles' killing of his children (corpses present)
Or. 1018-1055	Orestes - Electra (m)	Their impending death
Bacch. 1350-1387 (trim. till 1367, the rest anapaestic)	Cadmus - Agave (both m) - Dionysus (delivers one verse, 1351)	Cadmus' and Agave's exile from their homeland and separation from each other

APPENDIX VII: OVERVIEW OF LAMENTING PASSAGES IN TRAGEDY

PLAYS	KOMMOI	CHORAL ODES	MONODIES	AMOIB. BETW. ACTORS	MONOLOGUES	DIALOGUES
Aeschylus						
Persae	256-289, 908-1077	548-597, 852-907				
Septem contra Thebas	875-1004	832-847				
Supplices		58-76, 113-132				
Agamemnon	1072-1177, 1448-1576				1256-1294, 1322-1330	1343-1347
Choephori	306-478, 869-874, 973-1043	22-83, 152-163			743-763	
Eumenides	778-891	143-154				
Prometheus Vinctus	128-192	397-435, 687-695		561-608	88-127	
Sophocles						
Ajax	201-262, 348-429, 879-973	596-645, 1185-1222			992-1039	974-984
Electra	121-250, 823-870, 1398-1421		86-120		807-822, 1126-1170	
Oedipus Tyrannus	1307-1368	1186-1222				
Antigone	806-882, 1261-1347					
Trachiniae		947-970		971-1043	1046-1111	
Philoctetes	1081-1217				782-805, 927-962	730-761
Oedipus Coloneus	510-548, 1670-1750					1432-1446
Euripides						
Alcestis	861-934	77-131, 213-237		244-279, 393-415		
Medea	131-213, 1270a-1281			96-130	1021-1039	1361-1414
Heraclidae					427-460	
Hippolytus	565-600, 811-855, 856-886	362-372, 1102-1150	669-679, 1347-1388			1407-1415, 1444-1461
Andromache	1173-1225		103-116	501-544, 825-865		

Hecuba	681-722, 1056-1108	444-483, 629-656, 905-952		154-215		409-440, 1035-1038
Supplices	798-837, 1072-1079, 1123-1164	42-86, 778-793, 918-924, 955-979			1080-1113	
Electra	167-212, 1165-1171, 1177-1232		112-166			1308-1341
Hercules Furens	749-762, 886-909, 910-921, 1042-1088	107-137, 348-441, 875-885, 1016-1038			1340-1393	1140-1152
Troades	153-196, 1209-1255, 1287-1332	197-229, 511-567, 820-859, 1060-1117	98-152	235-291, 577-607	466-510, 740-779, 790-798, 1156-1206	
Iphigeneia in Tauris	123-235, 644-656	1089-1152				
Ion	763-799	1229-1243	859-922			
Helen	164-252, 330-385	1107-1164				
Phoenissae	1335-1353	1284-1307	301-354, 1485-1529	1530-1581, 1710-1757	1595-1624	
Orestes	140-207, 1296-1310	316-347, 960-981 (see App. VIII)	982-1012, 1381-1392, 1395-1399			1018-1055
Bacchae					1302-1326, 1329ff	1350-1387
Iphigeneia in Aulis			1279-1335		442-468	
Rhesus	728-755, 895-914					

APPENDIX VIII: *ORESTES* 960-981

Although most editors attribute *Or.* 960-981 to the chorus, I think that Willink (1986, 240-41) is right in arguing that an antiphonal lament would more naturally follow the messenger's speech leading to Electra's monody in 982ff; so he gives lines 960-64, 971-75 to Electra and the rest of the two stanzas, i.e. 965-70, 976-81, to the chorus. In this case Electra announces formally her lament after the messenger speech (960 κατάρχομαι[1] στεναγμόν), performing gestures of grief as well (961ff), while the chorus naturally take up her address to the land of Pelasgia (960) in the form of an exhortation to it to cry aloud (965-66),[2] continuing her description of ritual actions with a reference to the theme of hair-cutting (966-67). Then they express their pity for the two siblings (968-70), generalized by Electra as the extinction of the whole house of Pelops (971-75), which gives rise to their general statement about the fate of mortals (976-81). The problem with this arrangement is that it is the only passage in Euripides where a messenger speech is followed by an actor's instead of the chorus' utterance. However, as Willink (1986, 241) argues, it is not impossible that Euripides departs from convention here, and there may well have been other similar cases in plays now lost. Furthermore, the parallels of other lamenting passages quoted below strongly suggest that antiphonal lamentation should be accepted here. So when the verb κατάρχω/-ομαι is used with reference to lamentation, as in *Or.* 960 (cf. *Hec.* 685, *Andr.* 1199), it is followed by a kommos. Also in *I.T.* 143ff and *Hel.* 164ff the heroines first announce their lamentation, then they are engaged in an exchange with the chorus and finally they deliver a monodic utterance in a decorative style contemplating the past, as Electra does in *Or.* 982ff. As Willink (1986, 240) argues, it would be intolerable if Electra's first reaction to the news she heard was her exotic wish in 982ff.

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[1]For the use of this verb to denote the beginning of a ritual procedure see p. 120, n. 29.

[2]Cf. the similar exhortation to Pherai by the chorus in *Alc.* 234-35 for Alcestis' imminent death.

APPENDIX IX: THEORIES SEEKING THE ORIGINS OF TRAGEDY TO A RITUAL THRENOS

The most prominent of these theories is that of Nilsson (1911), who considers especially important for the question of the origins of tragedy the τραγικοὶ χοροί performed in Sicyon in honour of Adrastus and reported by Herodotus (V. 67. 5). He believes that Herodotus simply draws a parallel between the choruses which were honouring Adrastus in his own time and those performing in tragedy in the festival of Dionysus; thus, τραγικός is used in the sense of 'tragic'. In particular, Nilsson seeks the origins of the dialogic form of drama in the antiphonal character of the lament for the dead. The singing of the threnos was an important part of the contests (musical, athletic) organized in their honour, thus, Nilsson argues, even the agonistic spirit of the dramatic contests can be better explained if seen as inherited from the cult of the dead heroes.[3]

Dieterich (1908) combines the theories about Dionysiac origin and the cult of the dead. He argues that the old Dionysiac festival in Athens took place in the Anthesteria, the festival of the souls, where a chorus of satyrs, who represented the dead themselves, was dancing round the car of Dionysus, the lord of souls. This dance, according to Dieterich, was transformed into a work of art by Thespis, dissociating itself from the particular cult, and this is how the public lamentation for the dead became a fixed part of tragedy. In later times he supposes that the whole performance was transferred to the festival of the Great Dionysia.

The theory developed by Ridgeway (1910) is, similarly, that tragedy originated in the worship of the dead at their tombs. He argues that the dramatic performances at the Great Dionysia were of a comparatively late date, a reorganization by Peisistratus of festivals that existed from an early period and in which the cult of the dead played an important part. They honoured the local hero and consisted of dances and solemn hymns round his tomb. At a later date the local cult was absorbed into that of Dionysus, which had as its result the change from the tomb of the hero to the altar of the god round which the chorus now danced. Lamentation was a natural consequence of the cult of the dead and, according to Ridgeway, forms one of the most primitive elements in Greek tragedy.

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[3]Cf., similarly, Adrados (1975) below.

In more recent years Adrados (1975) has stressed the prominence of threnoi in Greek tragedy, which he considers together with *agones* as its most characteristic structures, sharing common features. He criticizes Aristotle's theory about the origins of tragedy from the dithyramb (*Poetics* 1149a) as a mere construction, agreeing with it only in one point, that the dialogic element forms its most ancient nucleus.[4] Adrados argues that the threnos for a dead hero or some god of the vegetation cycle (e.g. Adonis), which had a mimetic character, forms part of the agricultural religion, and shows how the passage from these agricultural cults to theatre became possible, as it emerged as a new kind of contest modelled on the already existing musical competitions. Criticisms of the above theories are many,[5] but it is not my intention to discuss them here. Despite the different views they present of the way the passage from the hero-cult/lamentation for the dead heroes to tragedy was achieved, they all insist on the central role of mourning scenes in tragedy, placing particular emphasis on their occurrence in the early plays, which is indeed difficult to miss.

The prominence of lamentation in tragedy is recognized by other scholars as well, independently of their views about its origins. So, for example, Murray (1927) argues that the form of tragedy can be explained as a modification of the sequence of a primitive ritual representing the sufferings of an 'Ενιαυτὸς Δαίμων, a Year Spirit who is identified with Dionysus, which consists of six stages: 1) *agon* (the Year against its enemy), 2) *pathos* of the Year-Daimon, 3) messenger's speech, 4) *threnos*, 5) *anagnorisis* (discovery or recognition of the slain god), 6) *theophany* (his resurrection or apotheosis). As is generally recognized, this scheme is a mere construction which cannot be applied to any extant tragedy, but it is important for my purpose here to show that it also considers threnos as a fixed part of tragedy. Else (1957b, 1965), in contrast to the usual approach, excludes any ritualistic background[6] or any gradual development of tragedy from pre-existing forms, arguing that

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[4]Similarly, Hölzle (1934) and Peretti (1939) argue for the importance of threnoi with epirrhematic structure in the origins of tragedy.

[5]Exemplified for the older ones in the work of Pickard-Cambridge (1962), who argues for a Dionysiac origin.

[6]This is certainly a distinctive feature of his theory. Ritual language and ritual practice are so pervasive in tragedy and the connection between ritual action and action in the theatre can be so close (see Easterling 1988; 1993) that it is reasonable to assume, as the majority of theories do, a ritual origin.

it is the product of the creative mind of Thespis and Aeschylus. Thus, although he recognizes the prominence of lamentation in tragedy, he is unwilling to trace its origins to ritual threnoi, arguing that it is more probable that Thespis simply incorporated into it the choral lyric of his time, which consisted of threnoi, hymns, paeans and other songs.

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